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ABSTRACT

This project involved an approach that allowed students to take on greater responsibility for learning by using collaborative skills and habits of mind which resulted in better awareness of their own thinking. The targeted population consisted of students in growing upper-middle class suburban communities, located west of Chicago, Illinois. The two groups of students were a self-contained fifth grade class and a special needs sixth grade class that is mainstreamed for a portion of the day. Analysis of the probable cause data revealed that students lacked positive self-perception of social skills in a learning environment. Further analysis suggested that students lacked a feeling of security and did not display positive attitudes or take ownership of their learning. A review of the research literature suggested the following strategies: introducing productive habits of mind, helping students understand positive attitudes and perceptions about learning, and instructing students to understand and use acceptable social skills in cooperative learning. Results indicated that the intervention was successful in improving learner confidence and responsibility. (Contains 28 appendices, which present data collection instruments and project materials. Contains 42 references.) (WJC)

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IMPROVING LEARNER RESPONSIBILITY BY UTILIZING THINKING STRATEGIES AND COOPERATIVE LEARNING

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master's of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

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ABSTRACT

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TITLE: Improving Learner Responsibility by Utilizing Thinking Stategies and Cooperative Learning

ABSTRACT: This paper describes an innovative approach that allowed students to take on greater responsibility for learning by using collaborative skills and habits of mind which resulted in better awareness of one's own thinking. The targeted population consisted of students in growing upper-middle class, suburban communities, located west of Chicago, Illinois. The two groups of students were a self-contained fifth grade class and a special needs sixth grade class who were mainstreamed for a portion of the day.

Analysis of the probable cause data revealed students lack positive self-perception of social skills in a learning environment. Further analysis suggested that students lack a feeling of security and did not display positive attitudes or take ownership of their learning.

A review of the research literature suggested that the following strategies for interention were effective: introducing productive habits of mind, understanding positive attitudes and perceptions about learning, and instructing students to understand and to use acceptable social skills in cooperative learning.

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Chapter 1
PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

The students of the targeted groups of self-contained elementary fifth grade, and special needs sixth grade do not take full responsibility for their learning. Evidence for the existence of the problem includes portfolios of incomplete work and poor quality performance along with anecdotal records, observations and teacher journal entries of disruptive behavior and work avoidance.

Problem Context: School A

As of September 1994, elementary School A in Community School District A, serves students in grades kindergarten through grade five. Built in 1928, School A is the oldest K-5 building in the district, but it is very unique in that it is primarily a "walking school" with a large percentage of its students living in the surrounding neighborhood near school. It is unique in that it is the smallest elementary school in the district. There are two sections of each grade level. It is a two story brick building that is not only stable in student population, but also stable in structure.

With its small enrollment of 274 students, it has a staff of 11 regular teachers and a media specialist. These full time teachers are joined by 12 other part time teachers who provide special services to the students. These include a speech therapist, a social worker, a psychologist, a reading resource specialist, a Learning Disability/Behavior Disorder resource specialist, and a nurse. The five other part time teachers teach physical education, music, band, and orchestra. The school is administered by a principal, and there is one school secretary.

The racial/ethnic background of this elementary school is 96.9 percent White, 1.2 percent Black, 0.0 percent Mexican-American, 1.9 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.0 percent Native American. Family socioeconomic status covers a wide range, with 3.5 percent in the low income bracket and the majority in the middle income levels. The limited-English proficient students were 0.0 percent. School A's attendance rate was 95.9 percent. Its student mobility rate was 14.9 percent. The average class size is 23. The average expenditure per pupil in district A is $5,138 (1994 District A Report Card).

The fifth grade class is the target group. Their classroom is 30 by 22.5 feet with built-in student closets on the east side of the room and built-in shelves on the west side of the room. Blackboards line the width of the room on the north side with bulletin boards on the south side. Windows line the length of the west wall and face the students' closet doors which are covered with blackboards on the east side.

In this room, the self-contained fifth grade class spends six and one half hours learning. The day begins at 9:10 a.m. and ends at 3:25 p.m. The

typical curriculum is math, language arts, spelling, science, social studies, and drug education. The class consists of a heterogeneous group of 26 students. There are 13 girls and 13 boys. The teacher has taught fifth grade at this school for 24.5 years. For the rest of this paper elementary School A, fifth grade, will be referred to as the fifth grade.

The Community Unit School District A is a growing school district with a current enrollment of 8,986. There are 14 schools: nine elementary, two junior high schools, and one high school. Each of the nine elementary schools service students in grades kindergarten through five. The two junior high schools span grades six through eight, and the high school includes students in grades nine through twelve. The staff/student ratio is 1:20.9.

The policy-making body of the district is the seven-member board of education. Each member is elected to a four year term. The chief executive officer of the district is the Superintendent of Schools. Reporting directly to the superintendent are five district-wide administrators. Their areas of responsibility are general administration personnel; business and fiscal management; facilities and transportation; staff development and instruction; and special education and pupil services.

The racial/ethnic background of the Community A is 95.6 percent White, 0.5 percent Black, 2.0 percent Hispanic, 1.7 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.1 percent Native American. Family socioeconomic status covers a wide range, with 3.4 percent in the low income bracket , and the majority are in the middle income levels. Community A has a per-capita income of $55,544. Fifty-one families earn less than $5,000 and 300 families earn more than $150,000. When looking at the employment profile, there are

12,000 people employed in this community and 326 unemployed which results in a 2.6 percent unemployment rate.

	Employed	Unemployed
1. Whites	11,991	311
2. Blacks	59	0
3. American Indian	20	0
4. Asian/Pacific	75	15
5. Hispanic	279	0
6. Other	55	0
Totals	12,200	326

(Census Report Community A, 1994)

The total cost of housing in Community A varies greatly. Nine homes or .2 percent are less than $15,000, while 110 homes or 2.17 percent are greater than $500,000. Seventy percent of the housing cost varies from $75,000 to $175,000. This would be the median of housing value.

The adult education levels in Community A are as follows:

3%	Less than 8th grade education
8%	9th-12th grade / no diploma
23%	High School Graduate
24%	Some college no--degree
10%	Associate degree
25%	Bachelor's degree
7%	Graduate degree or professional degree

Sixty-five percent of the people in Community A have had some exposure to higher education. (Community A 1990 Community Profile).

The limited-English-proficient students are 0.8 percent. District A's 1994 attendance rate was 95.2. percent. Its student mobility rate was 9.9 percent. The average class size is 24. The average expenditure per pupil in this district A is $5,138. The 1993-94 comoposite ACT test score is 23.6. The high school graduation rate in the district is 94.4 percent (1994 District A Report Card).

The district has a firm foundation upon which to build its future. Community A passed a 44 million dollar building referendum in the spring of 1993. The future plans include a third junior high, an additional building to the campus at the high school, and additions to six of the elementary schools in the fall of 1995. This community area is a supportive one which values education. Community members are involved in the Professional Partners Program, Facilities Advisory Commission, Finances Advisors, Curriculum Advisory Council, Strategic Plan Steering Committee, Education Foundation, District Parent Teacher Organization (DPTO), schools' PTO's, associations, and booster groups.

Problem Context School B

Middle School B in Community School District B serves students from fifth through eighth grade. Built in 1955, School B was originally a senior high school, serving students in grades seven through twelve. In 1962 and again in 1965, construction additions dramatically increased the size of the building. It is a one story brick building with a surrounding athletic campus and is in walking distance to the current senior high school. Students are driven to school because of its location in a rural area (1995 School District B Handbook).

The current student enrollment is 536, and there are 32 full-time teachers, two part-time teachers, along with a school psychologist, a guidance counselor, and a social worker. School B is designed with interdisciplinary teams of teachers who work together to plan instruction in core curriculum for the students. The core curriculum includes language arts, social studies, math, science, and possibly foreign language. Students also experience instruction in art, music, home economics, industrial arts, keyboarding, and computer literacy. The school is administered by a principal and an assistant principal. There are two secretaries and a nurse.

The racial/ethnic background of this middle school is 96 percent White, .7 percent Black, 2.3 percent Mexican-American, 1.0 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.0 percent Native American. The family socio-economic status has 1.3 percent in the low-income bracket and the majority of families in the middle income level. There are no limited English proficient students. School B's attendance rate was 96.7 percent in 1994. Its student mobility rate was 3.7 percent. The average class size is 24.5. The average expenditure per pupil is $6,142 (1994 District B Report Card).

The sixth grade special needs class is the target group. This class is a heterogeneous group of six boys and nine girls who are identified with learning disabilities. The subjects taught to this target group are reading and social studies. The time spent on each subject daily is 40 minutes. These particular students are mainstreamed for other subjects throughout the day with this teacher as a collaborative teacher for their classes. The classroom is 10 by 30 feet, and there are three adjoining rooms which are currently used as offices for two separate teams of teachers. There are three windows in the

room and one chalkboard. For the rest of this paper middle school B, sixth grade special needs will be referred to as the sixth grade.

Community Unit School District B has a current enrollment of 1,766 students. There are one high school, one junior high school and three elementary schools. The teacher/student ratio 1:19.8 (1994 District School B Report Card).

The school board is a seven member elected body with the chief officer as the superintendent of the district. The total number of teachers for this district is 102. The percent of teachers with a bachelor's degree is 70.6 percent, and those with a master's degree and above is 29.4 percent. The average number of years of teaching experience is 12.3 (1994 District B Report Card).

The racial/ethnic background of the students is 99.0 percent White and 1.0 percent Hispanic. There are 1.2 percent low income students in this district and 0.8 percent limited English proficient students. This district's attendance rate in 1993-94 was 95.8 percent and the student mobility rate was 7.3 percent. The average class size is 21.4, and the high school graduation rate was 84.3 percent in 1994. The average ACT score was 22.5 (1994 District B School Report Card).

The Surrounding Communities

Community A is a rural/suburban community approximately 40 miles west of a major metropolitan area. It is a certified city with a population of 25,282 in 1994. The city geographically encompasses approximately 57 square miles (11 of which are in the city limits of Community A). It has become an important retail and manufacturing center covering approximately

nine miles. Single family housing permits are authorized at a solid pace. There are about 9,296 homes-both single family and multi-family dwellings. New housing units continue to be attractive to younger families. The median housing value is $148,800. The median household income in Community A is $46,655 (Community A Relocation Guide 1994).

In School District A, there is much interest in cooperative learning and thinking strategies. There have been district initiatives developed which concern these areas of learning. In May, 1995, a cooperative learning staff survey was conducted in order to see who of the staff was in need of training. Courses were offered throughout the 1994-95 school year and the summer. A goal is to have all teachers trained in cooperative learning by spring 1996. At the beginning of the 1995 school year, the district was involved in the development of an implementation plan to instruct staff in a thinking framework called Dimensions of Learning. Staff training began for this thinking framework the previous summer with a core of teachers These areas of concentration reflect two of the seven major student outcomes which state that students will think critically and will display interpersonal skills, self-understanding, and ethical conduct.

Community B is a rural community approximately 55 miles west of a major metropolitan area. It is primarily an area of single family homes. The total population is at present 15,032. The median home value is presently $127,900 and the median household income is approximately $46,000.

In School District B, the staff and the community are strongly committed to meet the special needs of all students. Those needs: intellectual, emotional, physical, social, and cultural are met by various

teaching methods. Offering age-appropriate activities and promoting self-worth and self-esteem are two of the major methods this district uses. Along with these, developing skills where students will be life-long learners is a priority.

The District PTO has a strong support group which promotes all of these methods. Fund raising is continuous for extracurricular activities, as well as core programs. The district staff are always consulted and involved in any decision making.

National Context of the Problem

A prevalent problem in many classrooms across the nation is the fact that some students do not take responsibility for their learning. Where does this attitude or behavior come from and what can be done about it? This attitude is seen in above average, average, and below average students. Why do some learn and others do not? "When we help students take responsibility for their learning, we have taken a giant step in promoting motivational equality in the classroom" (Alderman, 1990, p.30). Our job as educators is to produce life-long learners who are eager to engage in learning. As educators we must make education liberating and appealing (Davis, 1983). Teaching should be aimed at the type of learning which will stay with the students beyond the Friday test, the final exam, and school itself (Perrone,1994).

Successful students are those who have specific goals. "Inefficient learners" (Pressley & Levin, 1987) are low achieving students who "fail to apply a learning strategy that would be beneficial" (Alderman, 1990, p.28). Many students attribute failure to the lack of intelligence, and this often leads them to believe that school is a dead end street. Before students take

ownership of their learning, schools must make responsible curriculum choices. These choices "must always attend to *what* knowledge for *whom* and for *what possible uses*" (Davis, 1983, p.59). Hopefully a student will be interested enough to learn and seize a course offering by "engaging, embracing, and possessing the offering" (Davis, 1983, p.60). Unless individual students take the possibilities for liberation, they will not be free. So what is offered and how it is offered matters a great deal. Maybe if we make "the offerings increasingly rich and exciting to students" (Davis, 1983, p.60), they will take responsibility for their learning.

Educators have a responsibility of providing students with a positive, safe climate which will motivate students to learn (Everston & Harris, 1991). Students will become responsible learners if they are provided with the type of learning situation conducive to this. Educators must model positive and responsible behavior if they are to expect this from their students (Landfried, 1989).

Along with a positive climate there must be a well organized classroom which is effectively managed and non-chaotic. This too, is the responsibility of the educators.

In an effort to make students more responsible for their learning, we hope to make connections between taking on this responsibility and new thinking strategies that will make their learning more meaningful. In addition, we hope to make a connection between learner responsibility and cooperative learning which centers around the many life skills that students will use in the real world. In essence, students need to become life-long learners.

Chapter 2

PROBLEM EVIDENCE AND PROBLEM CAUSE

This chapter describes the evidence and causes of the absence of learner responsibility within the fifth grade at School A and the sixth grade at School B.

Problem Evidence

In order to document the need for learner responsibility within the fifth and sixth grade classes, the following three sources were used: behavior record forms, staff surveys, and student questionnaires.

The first data source was a behavior record form developed by the researchers (Appendix A) to aid in the recording process of the behavior patterns of the targeted groups. It was apparent to the researchers that both targeted groups exhibited behaviors which they felt contributed to lack of learner responsibility. Incomplete assignments, failure to use assignment notebooks, disruptive behavior and off-task incidents which prevented other students from learning, were those behaviors that were recorded on a monthly basis. It was the researchers' opinions that a responsible student would have his/her assignments complete, would always have his/her assignment book, would not participate in disruptive behavior, and would be on task in learning situations.

Of the 26 students in the fifth grade class, 26 were involved in this process over a four week time period. A summary of the incidents and behavior categories of the fifth graders is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Number and Categories of Irresponsible Behavior

School A

Sept. 5, 1995 through Sept. 30, 1995

Behavior	Number of Incidents	Number of Students Involved
Incomplete Assignments	45	19
No. Assignment Book	10	8
Disruptive Behavior	63	18
Off-task	71	19

Of the 189 incidents recorded during the one month period, 24 percent dealt with failure to complete assignments; 5 percent involved failure to use assignment books properly; 33 percent dealt with disruptive behavior; and 38 percent dealt with off-task behavior. A further analysis of the behavior forms indicated that 72 percent of the students were responsible for 95 percent of the incidents.

Of the 16 students in the sixth grade class, all were involved in this process in the four week time period. A summary of the number of incidents and behavior categories of the sixth graders is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Numbers and Categories of Irresponsible Behavior

School B

Sept. 5, 1995 through Sept. 30, 1995

Behavior	Number of Incidents	Number of Students Involved
Incomplete Assignments	31	15
No. Assignment Book	11	5
Disruptive Behavior	11	4
Off-task	22	8

Of the 75 incidents recorded during the one month period, 41 percent dealt with failure to complete assignments; 15 percent dealt with failure to use assignment books properly; 15 percent dealt with disruptive behavior; and 29 percent dealt with off-task behavior. A further analysis of the behavior forms indicated that incomplete assignments involved the highest percentage of students.

A second data source which supported research for learner responsibility were teacher surveys (Appendices B & C) developed by the researchers. Each survey was edited for the individual sites. In the fifth grade school, the survey (Appendix B) was conducted on the staff consisting of 11 classroom teachers and the learning resource teacher. In district A there had been an introduction to Dimensions of Learning (Marzano, 1992) dealing with instructing students on thinking strategies, and a district wide effort to educate staff on using cooperative learning effectively. This does not necessarily mean all teachers instruct their students about thinking strategies nor use cooperative learning effectively. Teachers were asked five questions

dealing with the students they had in their class. The following questions were: 1. Does your class listen attentively? 2. Does your class demonstrate critical, creative, and self-regulatory thinking? 3. Does your class function well in cooperative learning groups? 4. Does your class complete assignments? 5. Does your class display self-control? In the sixth grade school, the survey was conducted on a sample of 10 from the staff which included the sixth grade team of teachers and selected special education teachers. They were asked three questions pertaining to responsible behavior patterns among students: 1. Is there acceptable behavior among students during a cooperative learning lesson? 2. Is it necessary to reward students for responsible activities, such as homework completion? 3. Have you found it necessary for students to use assignment notebooks to complete homework and other assignments? The following graphs (Figures 3 & 4) display the results of these surveys.

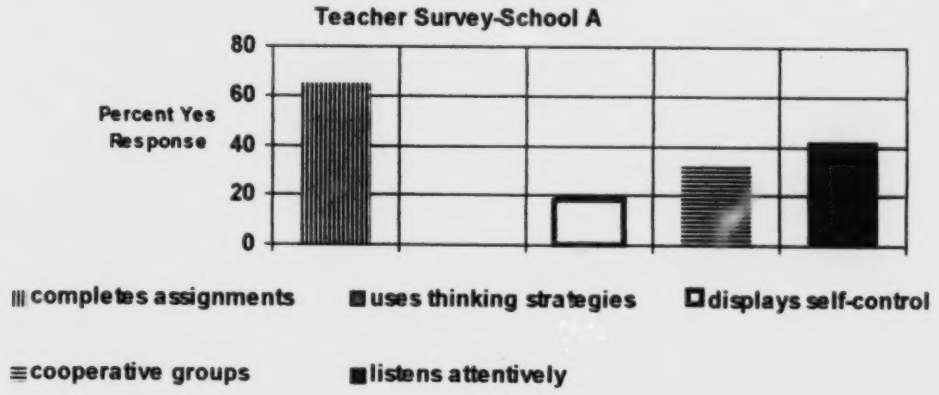

Figure 3

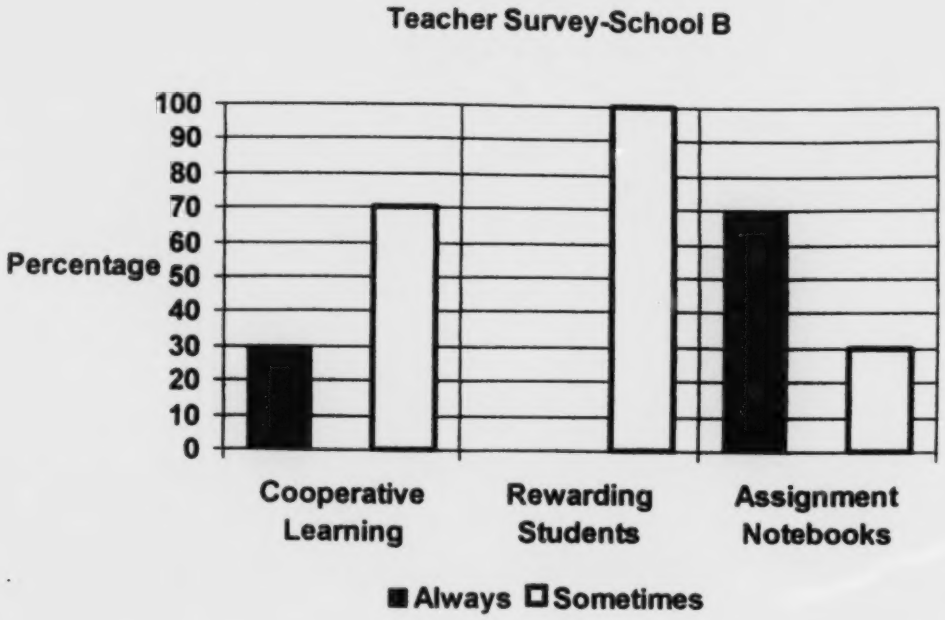

Figure 4

After compiling results of the staff surveys, both researchers found that there was a need to improve learner responsibility among students in general. It was also determined that students should be held accountable for irresponsible behavior, such as incomplete assignments and inappropriate behavior. Furthermore, they concluded that cooperative learning groups were not always functioning at the maximum level of achievement.

The third and final method of data collection was a questionnaire (Appendix D) which both researchers designed and administered to the targeted groups of students. The questionnaire was based on Marzano's Dimensions of Learning (Marzano, 1992). Prior to the questionnaire being

administered, both researchers obtained permission from the parents of the students in the targeted groups (Appendix E). Three of the questions from the student questionnaire were selected for the graph in Figure 5 since the results of the answers from both targeted groups were very similar. The questions are: 1. Do you like coming to school? 14. Do you have confidence? and 26. Do you push yourself to the limits? The percentage of students answering "sometimes" to these questions was almost identical for both targeted groups. In the sixth grade special needs class, 85 percent answered "sometimes" to question number 1. In the fifth grade self-contained class 75 percent answered "sometimes" to question number one. Fifty percent of both targeted groups answered "sometimes" to question number 14. Finally, 65 percent of the sixth grade and 62 percent of the fifth grade answered "sometimes" to question number 26. The researchers concluded that these responses may be significant in probable cause for lack of learner responsibility.

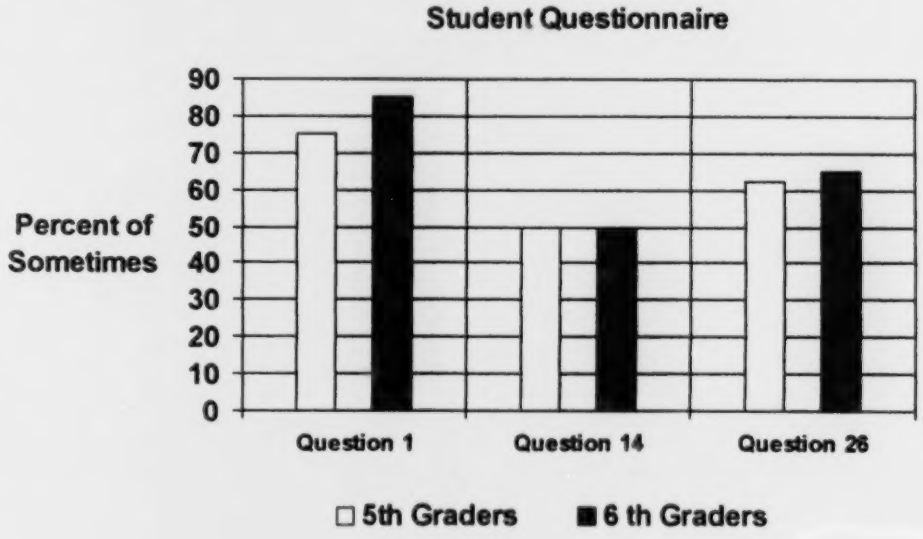

Figure 5

The researchers administered the student questionnaires to the targeted student groups during the school day to determine if there were patterns of lack of learner responsibility in specific areas. The questionnaire was read orally to the targeted groups. Each question was explained in order for the students to have a clear understanding of what was being asked. Their findings revealed that there was an uncertainty among students about their role as a responsible learner.

Probable Causes of Problem

The intent of the use of the student questionnaire as a source of data collection was to determine patterns of behavior which would have significant effects on learner responsibility. This data was then compared to the data collection of the student discipline record forms. This comparison supported the results of the staff survey which also gave insight to a lack of learner responsibility.

Students display irresponsibility when they have poor self-perception of who they are, and this is reflected in their learning. The confident student will be more successful academically in a positive classroom environment and will transfer this behavior into the world as a life-long learner (Brooks & Brooks, 1993).

Students who have never been taught various thinking strategies have difficulty with problem solving. Creative, critical, and self-regulatory thinking will aid the student in learning. The student can use these thinking strategies in all types of learning situations and create meaningful connections which will be utilized throughout life.

Students who lack social skills can only improve those skills with guided instruction of cooperative learning and community building within the classroom. The student will feel a sense of belonging in the learning community, if he/she feels safe, comfortable, and eager to learn with his/her peers.

In school district A, there have been initiatives developed to insure that all teachers will be trained in cooperative learning by spring, 1996. At the beginning of the 1995 school year, the district was involved in the development of an implementation plan to instruct staff in a thinking framework called Dimensions of Learning (Marzano,1992). Staff training began for this thinking framework the previous summer with a core of teachers. This thinking framework program is relatively new and all teachers have not yet effectively adopted it. This may be one reason why knowledge of thinking strategies were not apparent by the students.

Summarizing the probable cause data collected by the researchers led to the following possible conclusions:

1. There was evidence that a significant number of students lacked a positive self-perception of themselves in the learning environment.

2. There was evidence that the staff observed a significant lack of thinking strategies among students.

3. Students showed a lack of social skills in cooperative learning which was reflected in classroom behavior.

Investigation of current literature substantiates these conclusions.

Probable Causes from Literature

There are three ways to learn: individually, competitively, and cooperatively. Depending on one's goals for learning, all three are valid. The first two have been used traditionally for years. The third, cooperative learning, is an innovative learning style which is meeting much success today in schools. It uses groups for building both social and academic skills. Research supports the premise that children learn more effectively in a cooperative learning situation (Johnson, 1980). According to Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1987), students must decide to "sink or swim together" while using cooperative learning. Individual learning allows the students to work independent of each other toward a set criteria. Success or failure depends on their performance alone. Competition is presently the most dominant form of learning (Johnson et al., 1987). Data suggests according to Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1987) that when comparing cooperation, competition, and individualistic learning (122 studies from 1924 to 1980), the results indicate that cooperation produces achievement over the other learning styles and has positive effects on classroom climate. According to Burke (1992), cooperative learning allows for positive interaction, self-esteem, student empowerment, and most importantly, student responsibility. It makes learning more interesting and meaningful while students develop social skills which will make them more productive human beings in society.

The relationship between how teachers teach and how children learn has been education. Marzano (1992) studied 30 years of research on the learning process and realized that a new instructional framework was

necessary to address the issue of how children learn. He goes on to explain that dimensions or thinking framework is a way that learning becomes a process of constructing meaning. If teachers would introduce and encourage the use of habits of mind, which are: self-regulated thinking, and critical and creative thinking strategies, students would develop these strategies and would become constructive learners. Brooks and Brooks (1993) found that in order for constructive learning to take place, the teacher must provide a learning environment where students will search for meaning and learn to question responsibly. They go on to say that students must understand that they are responsible for their own learning, and that learning will be more meaningful when they use these thinking strategies. Giving students thinking strategies and allowing them to construct their own understanding, results in learner responsibility. The ultimate goal will result in independent, responsible learners who will eventually become life-long learners.

The child who has learned to be confident as a result of being nurtured and loved, will be more successful academically. Research supports the premise that when children view themselves as being competent, they are able to tolerate and cope with failure and will engage in challenging academics (Lumsden,1994). According to Ornstein, (1994), a positive self-image can influence test scores and grades. Furthermore, it is suggested that designing curriculum so that it be based on self-esteem is an obligation of all educators (Mitchell & McCollum, 1983). White, (as cited in Glasser, 1992), theorized that learning activities should be adjusted to academic levels where children will succeed. Students will experience rewards from their accomplishments and will be encouraged to be life-long learners.

The classroom must be one that is organized and managed effectively. A positive learning situation will be the result of a carefully planned and organized classroom (Everston & Harris, 1991). Students should be involved in developing rules for their classroom. Burke (1992) theorized that students will follow a plan more readily if they have a say in its development. Along with being organized and managed effectively, the classroom must include a caring teacher as its facilitator. According to Noddings (1995), academic achievement will be attained by those students who experience a caring teacher. Noddings also believes that teachers should choose themes of care for the curriculum. Glasser believes that self-responsibility will be evident with those students who are in an atmosphere of warmth and concern. In the non-coercive classroom, students will value education and experience it in a way that no other students before them have (Glasser, 1992).

In summary, academic success is to be expected when children are confident. Children will feel confident when they are nurtured and loved and live in an environment that promotes this.

This confidence coupled with an organized classroom which is effectively managed by a caring teacher, is an essential tool for learner responsibility. There will be no coercion, but rather a strong desire of students to learn.

Cooperative learning along with the ability to think effectively and efficiently empowers the students to become responsible learners. The positive interactive and self-esteem they experience in cooperative learning only increases their confidence as a learner. Through the use of critical, creative, and self-regulatory thinking strategies they are motivated and

learning becomes more meaningful. They are constructing connections in their learning process. Using cooperative learning and thinking strategies is an interactive process unique to each individual student which results in the development of a responsible learner.

In both classrooms, it was noted that children lack social skills and could not effectively learn in a cooperative learning setting. Overall lack of organizational skills pointed to irresponsible behavior patterns in both classrooms and set an uncomfortable classroom climate for productive learning. They lacked confidence and self-esteem and therefore could not demonstrate learner responsibility. In both classrooms the students were incapable of using viable thinking strategies to aide in problem solving.

Current research shows"when children are raised in a home that nurtures a sense of self-worth, competence, autonomy and self-efficacy, they will be more apt to accept the risks inherent in learning. Conversely, when children do not view themselves as basically competent and able, their freedom to engage in academically challenging pursuits and capacity to tolerate and cope with failure are greatly diminished." (Lumsden, 1994, p.90)

The probable cause data are the following: lack of self-perception in a learning situation, uncomfortable classroom environment, ineffective and poorly implemented cooperate learning, and lack of strategies for higher level thinking. These elements are not totally present and cause a lack of learner responsibility in the classroom.

Chapter 3
THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Probable cause data which we chose to address are the following: lack of self-perception in a learning situation, uncomfortable classroom environment, ineffective and poorly implemented cooperative learning, and lack of strategies for higher level thinking. These elements were the basis for a literature search which centered around the original four probable causes. The literature search included information on self-perception related to social skills, a safe, risk-free learning environment, cooperative learning, and various strategies for higher level thinking.

Self Esteem

The idea of self-esteem or self perception is as old and universal as humanity itself. Three centuries before the birth of Christ, in the Golden Age of Greece, "orkeiosis" was the root of everything positive. This term means the older the teaching, the more it presents self-wisdom and self-honor as a source of strength.

During infancy and early childhood, more than other time in our lives, we learn of our abilities and work at enhancing them. Human beings have an intrinsic motive to grow physically and mentally. Self-esteem, or how we

perceive ourselves, is a developmental process which is most affected by those around us.

If a child is nurtured and loved and made to feel important, he or she will learn confidence and therefore display a positive attitude about life in general. This, of course, will be evident in the classroom and in all other learning situations. The confident child will be more successful both academically and socially.

A review of the literature supports this concept. It is not reinforcement, per se, that influences children's behavior in a learning situation, but the belief that they have of their own competencies (Stipeck, 1982).

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Other research shows that those students who are in control of their own learning environment have a strong sense of their own efficacy, and therefore, believe that they can influence their test scores and grades. (Orstein, 1994)

Confidence and control are two crucial factors for a successful learner. "If children and adolescents experience self-doubt and failure in many situations, especially those that they judge to be important to significant others, their over all sense of competence and confidence is low." (Brooks, 1992, p.545)

Furthermore, Brooks suggested that adults must provide children and adolescents with opportunities to make choices and decisions, and to solve problems that impact their lives. Children can develop a sense of ownership and commitment when given the opportunity to assume responsibility. (Brooks, 1992)

Mitchell and McCollum (1983) theorized that self-esteem must be a major concern of the curriculum planning teams. A great deal of thought promoting a positive self-image must be given when designing curriculum.

Literature prior to this suggested that educators must provide learning activities which are not only meaningful to students, but are adjusted to academic levels at which they will succeed. Mastery of learning activities result in competency (Glasser, 1992). This leads us to the second factor in promoting learner responsibility which is, classroom climate.

Classroom Climate

It is important for educators to set the scene for a successful learning experience where students will be intrinsically motivated and will take responsibility for their learning.

A review of the literature shows that a first step is a non-chaotic and organized classroom. According to Everston and Harris (1991), a safe climate and a caring teacher set the tone for a positive learning situation. The classroom climate must be a supportive one without chaos. The teacher must organize and manage the classroom effectively.

Further research shows that educators must provide experiences which motivate students to educate themselves. This, along with modeling positive behavior, can promote responsibility (Landfried, 1989).

Student involvement in setting classroom guidelines and rules is a stepping stone for a cooperative learning environment. According to Burke (1992), students will not "buy into'" the system if they are not a part of the process in developing it. Additional research states that "the more students are involved in the process of developing rules and consequences, the more they feel that the plan is a part of them. Ultimately, they will follow the plan if they had a say in its development" (Curwin & Mendler, 1988, p.52).

A caring teacher is of the utmost importance. Our children must believe that they are loved and cared for and learn to care for others if we are to achieve academic success. We, as educators should want more than academic success for our students. Educators must develop people with a strong capacitiy to care. Skills can be developed to make positive contributions (Noddings, 1995). Furthermore it is suggested that educators manifest their care in the choice of curriculum. Themes of care should be included in the curriculum. These can be organized in interdisciplinary units where teachers will teach in their own classroom or in teams (Noddings, 1995).

Finally Glasser sums it up in his idea of The Quality School:

> "With no coercion and in an atmosphere of warmth and concern for all, the Quality School would be an educational experience unlike any that students ever had and much different from any that their parents and teachers ever had. The theme would be quality work and self-responsibility, and the goal of all students would be to discover that education is the most powerful tool available to improve the quality of their lives" (Glasser, 1992, p.292).

Cooperative Learning

The predominant authorities of cooperative learning, Johnson and Johnson, Slavin, and Kagan, all agree that cooperative learning is the use of groups for building both social and academic skills (Bellanca & Fogarty, 1991). The social skills include active listening, learning how to disagree agreeably, and encouraging equal participation. These interpersonal skills are essential if students are to become effective working citizens and life-long learners in today's society.

The academic skills include comparing and contrasting, analyzing, inferring, and synthesizing information, making decisions, and problem solving to name a few. A responsible learner will realize when to apply knowledge, use skills and attitude in meaningful learning situations, and be able to perform and to demonstrate for others what they have learned and accomplished.

Cooper (1991-1992) found that cooperative learning is more than strategies or a teaching technique; it is an innovative way to experience teaching and learning. It is a philosophy that involves relationships which deal with students as they take on various roles and responsibility to be in a collaborative environment (Cooper, 1991-1992). Cooperative learning can be used by the students in performance-based assessment. It is a collaborative and interactive way to demonstrate success in a community of learners.

Burke (1992) reported that cooperative learning allows the teacher to be a facilitator who motivates the students and makes their learning more active and meaningful by encouraging them to be interactive learners. As a result of this promotive interaction, there is equal participation and peer

support. The cooperative learning community is a safe place to take risk and develop trust with its members. This new approach to learning has replace the traditional competitive style of learning in many classrooms.

Glasser's control theory says all students want to satisfy their basic needs of love, power, freedom, and fun (Glasser, 1992). Cooperative learning allows students to work together towards a goal which satisfies their needs. They receive support and encouragement from their peers and teacher. In cooperative learning they enjoy experiencing an innovative approach to learning. They are willing to work hard to achieve a common goal, and this work becomes valued by the members of the group bringing them all credit (Slavin, 1987). Students want to satisfy their needs for love, belonging, caring, sharing, fun, and cooperation (Glasser, 1986). This can be accomplished by using cooperative learning as a teaching technique.

If the classroom is comfortable and orderly, as in a cooperative learning environment, the students will be willing to take risks, will set reasonable goals, will see a purpose in learning what is asked of them, will take responsibility for success and failure, and will use cooperative learning methods properly. Slavin (1987) found that learning will motivate students to help one another. He goes on to say that as the students explain and teach to each other, they learn by doing so and enhance their own learning. In this non-threatening environment of cooperative groups, students are willing to take risks and ask for help if they do not understand something.

Kagan (1989-1990) discovered structures, content-free ways of organizing social interaction in the classroom, vary according to what is being taught. These structures can be adopted to classroom needs to create

Additional research by Johnson and Johnson (1989-1990) stated that interpersonal and small group skills, such as: eye contact to eye contact, encouraging, praising, disagreeing in an agreeable way, and listening, are necessary if cooperative learning is to be successful. In order to accomplish common goals, cooperative learning groups must communicate accurately and resolve conflicts constructively. Johnson and Johnson (1989-1990) found students learn a skill if they understand that it will improve their communication knowing what it can do and realize when to use it. Mastering social skills take much practice, and processing makes the students understand how well they use the skill.

Cooperative learning has the ability to change our schools, our communities, and our society if teachers are dedicated enough to take a risk and learn this teaching technique. Students will take learner responsibility if they experience success in learning and feel comfortable and safe in their environment.

Thinking Strategies

Marzano, et al. (1992) developed a framework of learning called the Dimensions of Learning. It is a comprehensive model of learning with various strategies that develop students into independent learners and competent thinkers. They go on to state that productive habits of mind is the most important dimension in learning because it permeates all areas of learning. Habits of mind consist of three categories: self-regulation, critical thinking, and creative thinking.

Self-regulation makes us more aware of learning and more controlled in our learning. Being aware of your own thinking, planning, using necessary

resources, being sensitive to feedback, and evaluating how effective you were, are some of the important components of self-regulation (Marzano et al., 1992). Some important habits of critical thinking are seeking accuracy and clarity, being open-minded, restraining impulsivity (thinking before responding), taking and defending a position, and respecting other peoples' feelings and ideas. Using these habits of critical thinking, will make the students more sensitive and reasonable in a learning experience (Marzano et al., 1992). In introducing the last mental habit of creativity, Marzano and the other researchers (1992) discovered that students must engage intensely in what they are doing even when the answer is not visible, challenge themselves to the limits, know what they want and go after it, and look for new and exciting ways to solve problems.

As instructors, we must consider activities and strategies that will help students develop productive habits of mind. These may come in the form of using a decision matrix, a Venn diagram for making comparisons, a classifying web, a T chart, and a process/cause pattern diagram, and a problem/solution pattern diagram (Appendix F). These thinking strategies are very helpful in problem solving. As teachers, we must teach them to think about learning and thinking so that they can make connections from prior knowledge that they have, and build on it (Brandt, 1992). The previously mentioned strategies will allow them to make mental models which they can use productively. The students will actively process information and being skilled cooperative learners, will explain and teach their new found knowledge to peers. There is no better way of learning than to teach someone else what you know.

use productively. The students will actively process information and being skilled cooperative learners, will explain and teach their new found knowledge to peers. There is no better way of learning than to teach someone else what you know.

Corno (1992) suggested that students learn by taking risks, being open-minded, following a plan, and seeing it to completion. Once the students make a decision on what is to be learned and use the previously modeled strategies, they realize their success or failure and take responsibility for it. Teachers must understand that in order for students to be self-regulated, teachers must be facilitators and allow students to make choices and handle the consequences.

In 1992 Frymier said that being responsible is thinking things out and being reflective on what was done. In addition, he said that being responsible is setting goals, working to achieve them, seeing them to completion, evaluating one's efforts and being responsible for one's own actions. Ornstein (1994) discussed the importance of using available strategies. He said that a self-regulated learner is a student who is in control of his own thinking and as a result, takes responsibility for his academic success. Furthermore, he said a student should set goals, make plans, see them to completion, use proper resources, take responsibility for his successes and failures, evaluate the effectiveness of his actions, and use proper cooperative learning methods.

Willis (1995) stated that learning should be fun and thinking strategies should be modeled expertly by teachers so that students understand the strategy and its proper use. Teachers should be explicit in what they expect

from their students and should work with them so that the students understand what is expected of them.

Introducing students to various thinking strategies, allows them to construct their own understanding of a learning situation. According to Brooks and Brooks (1993), students need to be encouraged to analyze, synthesize, classify, predict, and create their learning. These mental activities require students to make connections and construct new understandings.

While promoting student-to-student dialogue, as used in cooperative learning, the students are constructing their own learning by using interpersonal interaction. Open-ended questions are explored and researched which challenge students to focus on important issues and construct new understandings of their world. It is our job as educators to treat students of today as thinkers, creators, and constructors of their own learning. Working cooperatively with their peers as they use self-regulation, creative and critical thinking skills, will result in the students meeting success in their pursuit of understanding and will transform them into life-long learners (Brooks & Brooks, 1993).

Project Outcomes

Terminal Objective

As a result of the establishment of a cooperative learning environment and an instructional emphasis on self-regulation and critical and creative thinking during the period of September, 1995 to January, 1996, the targeted group of fifth and sixth graders will demonstrate an increased understanding of themselves as learners within their peer community and will demonstrate

an increased ownership in their learning as measured by discipline record forms, staff surveys and student questionnaires.

In order to accomplish the terminal objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Implementing a series of learning activities that address community spirit while enhancing self-perception of social skills
2. Establishing community building activities.
3. Experiencing curricular activities that require peer interaction resulting in successful cooperative learning.
4. Implementing a series of activities related to self-regulation, and critical and creative thinking.
5. Choosing curricular activities by the students requiring the use of various thinking strategies.

Project Solution Components

The major elements of the approach used to increase learner responsibility fell into four categories. The categories are: procedures designed to improve the students self-perception in their learning environment, social skills to be understood for successful cooperative learning, ideas used to create a safe learning community within the classroom environment, and the introduction of various thinking strategies to help in the learning process. These fundamental components are all necessary if learner responsibility is to improve. The student questionnaire and teacher survey indicated a lack of knowledge in practiced cooperative learning and thinking strategies, and student behavior indicated self-esteem based problems which were reflected in the behavior record form kept by the teacher. Probable

cause data revealed limited experience of cooperative learning structures, low-esteem of certain targeted students, and lack of knowledge and use of thinking strategies.

Action Plan

The action plan was designed to address four major solution components: improve self-esteem of the students, provide a safe learning environment, emphasize cooperative learning, and introduce and use various thinking strategies to aid in learning.

At the beginning of the school year 1995, self-esteem and community building activities were targeted for the first two weeks of school. Various community and team building activities were conducted to encourage a safe and relaxed learning environment. Various activities as such will continue throughout the entire school year.

The introduction of various thinking strategies was incorporated into cooperative learning lessons which began the last week of September, 1995, and continued for study and through the remainder of the year.

The implementation plan was presented in outline form and in chronological order, allowing for overlapping of strategies over time.

Action Plan Outline

I. Establish a cooperative environment

A. Implement a series of learning activities that address community spirit while enhancing self-perception of social skills.

B. Timing

1. 18 weeks; September, 1995 to January, 1996

2. Two times each week

3. 45 minutes each session

C. Activities

1. Students are assigned to make a brochure entitiled "All About Me" and arrange these pictures and captions on a piece of construction paper. These are to be shared during class time as the students will learn many new things about each other. These posters are on display for Open House for parents.

2. After approximately three or four weeks of school, students will be asked to write one positive thing about each student in the class. This can be done with a class list given to each student. The teacher will cut each statement and put these in an envelope for each student.

3. Students will design a class T-shirt.

4. Students will interview a partner and then introduce this person to the class.

5. Students will establish class rules to be used throughout the school year.

6. In pairs, students will create a Venn diagram describing each other's similarities and differences.
7. After completing a unit in Social Studies, students will identify a character and determine what thinking strategy this person may have used.

II. Utilize problem solving strategies to promote ownership in learning.

A. Implementing a series of activities related to self-regulation, critical and creative thinking.

B. Timing

1. 18 weeks from September, 1995 to January, 1996
2. Two times a week
3. 45 minutes each session

C. Activities

1. Students will have assignment notebook and will be responsible for having teacher initial it before leaving each day.
2. Students will set goals each nine weeks.
3. After completing a unit in social studies and in reading, students will identify a character and determine what thinking strategy this person may have used.
6. Students will use graphic organizers such as KWL charts, T charts, decision making matrixes, Venn diagrams, and webbing to demonstrate prior knowledge of given subjects.

Methods of Assessment

An assortment of data collection methods will be used to assess the effectiveness of the solution strategies. The following methods will serve to note changes in the way some students view themselves in relation to their peers, and how they function in the learning community as responsible learners. These results will be compared to the student questionnaire and the teacher survey (Appendices B and C) which was administered in September, 1995.

1. Students will write in journals on a weekly basis (Appendices H, J, O, R, and T).

2. Teachers will record behavior incidents on a monthly basis using Behavior Record Forms (Appendix A).

3. Academic progress will be recorded and documented by the teachers in the form of anecdotal records (Appendix G).

4. Staff surveys (Appendices B and C) will be readministered in January, 1996, to note any marked improvement in the areas of concern dealing with learner responsibility.

5. Student questionnaires (Appendix D) will be readministered in January,1996 to the targeted groups to determine if there will be an improved awareness in the areas of thinking strategies, cooperative learning, as well as an increased positive perception towards school and themselves as responsible learners.

Chapter 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of Interventions

The students of the targeted groups of self-contained elementary fifth grade, and special needs sixth grade do not take full responsibility for their learning. Evidence for the existence of the problem includes portfolios of incomplete work and poor quality performance along with anecdotal records, observations and teacher journal entries of disruptive behavior and work avoidance.

In order to accomplish the terminal objective, the following processes were necessary:

1. Implementing a series of learning activities that addressed community spirit while enhancing self-perception of social skills.
2. Establishing community building activities.
3. Experiencing curricular activities that require peer interaction resulting in successful cooperative learning.
4. Implementing a series of activities related to self-regulation, and critical and creative thinking.
5. Choosing curricular activities by the students requiring the use of various thinking strategies.

The implementations of strategies to address learner responsibility began in September, 1995. There were various types of interventions utilized. Promoting positive attitudes and perceptions and by focusing on the classroom as a safe learning environment were both implemented to improve self-esteem. The researchers used various cooperative learning activities to enhance social skill development. Higher level thinking strategies were addressed to improve students' self-regulatory, critical, and creative thinking.

The following is a detailed description of the intervention in Schools A and B.

Intervention School A

In School A, the fifth grade intervention began in the first week of September, 1995 and continued for eighteen weeks. The researcher had spent the last part of the summer preparing the classroom for the arrival of the students. The physical arrangement of the classroom was originally set up by the classroom teacher. The room contained six groups of desks ranging from four to five desks in a group. This arrangement was selected to support cooperative learning activities. Each desk had the student's name on it and allowed a place in which to keep their personal belongings and supplies.

The first and second interventions were to implement a series of learning activities that addressed community spirit while enhancing self-perception of social skills, self-esteem, and establishing community building activities. The students were welcomed immediately with the concept of community. As they entered the hallway to the room, they were greeted by a huge circular poster which was entitled "Circle of Friends-Community of

Learners." The researcher stressed the importance of having a safe place to learn and an environment where one is surrounded by all community members. The students brainstormed elements that make up a good community-what it looked like and sounded like. These characteristics were recorded on a large sheet of paper and hung on the other side of the door entrance so that each of the two posters told the rest of the school what this fifth grade class stood for and believed in for the 1995-1996 school year.

A series of activities allowed the students to introduce themselves and learn about others in the classroom, thus dealing with the topic of self-esteem. They interviewed each other in pairs and then introduced their partner to the class. They made brochures entitled "All About Me" which were on display in the classroom and used during the open house. This was a very successful way for students to demonstrate to their peers how they see themselves and how they hope to be perceived. This was an excellent self-esteem activity and was very successful. The class name was then brainstormed by the students and voted on in order to choose a perfect name for the class. Then class T-shirts were discussed and ideas were brainstormed to find the perfect one that would represent this new community. The color of the shirt, the picture, and the logo was decided upon by voting in a democratic way. This received a positive response by the members of the class and their parents. Many comments from parents reflected the satisfied feeling that they had with their child being involved in this community atmosphere. By the end of September, one parent said that she was impressed how her daughter considered her peers and their feelings, and that her daughter said "We must treat others as we would want to be treated." The students said that they

were proud to be a community member and were taking ownership in their community (Appendix H). One student said, "I really like the community because I feel safe," another said, "I think our community is great because we can trust each other and depend on each other."

Rules are important for life and so, too, in the classroom. In order for the students to take ownership for their new community, it was necessary for them to jointly create a Bill of Rights, listed below:

1. No put downs
2. Respect others' ideas and property.
3. Listen when others are talking.
4. Use appropriate behavior.
5. Think before you speak.
6. Raise hand before speaking.
7. Share with others.
8. Be responsible for your supplies and your learning.
9. Set a good example for others.
10. You have the right to feel safe and comfortable and have fun learning in this classroom.

Students signed the Bill of Rights as a contract (Appendix I). They took it home for their parents to see and understand the rules their child was agreeing to abide by for the 1995-96 school year. One student wrote in a reflection September 6, 1995, "My teacher ...isn't like other teachers. When you walk in that door, she didn't tell us the rules right away. We took it nice and slow, and we got to make the rules." This quote represented the community's feelings about making their own rules and realizing that they had a role in this

decision making process. Thus their attitudes and perceptions about their environment were very positive. Another student wrote," I think this will be a great year. I was scared the first day of school, but now I'm just fine. I like doing projects with our community." These reflections show the success on the second day of school about building community awareness (Appendix J).

After the first month of school, the students wrote one positive comment about each member of the community to verify that they had become aware of their community members. These comments were shared with each member. Students realized that it was easier to share a positive comment rather than a negative one about a peer. This was when it became evident that the group was becoming cohesive.

Throughout the 18 week period, self-esteem activities were selected so students revisted the idea of community (Appendix K). In one activity the students were paired at random, and created a Venn diagram relating each other's similarities and differences (Appendix L). These results were shared and discussed.

The next intervention was using curricular activities to promote cooperative learning and promote student ownership in their learning. Twice a week for 45 minute sessions the teacher reviewed by first modeling cooperative learning skills. Students were led to understand what each social skill looked like and sounded like by role playing. This was necessary for cooperative learning to be successful. They began using cooperative learning in the majority of their subjects. The students had time to discuss, brainstorm, work, share, reflect privately, then share as a group member. An example of cooperative learning in social studies was the New World colony

simulation called "Discovery." The students were divided into groups that experienced the mystery of exploration and the hazards and perils of colonial life and times so that they start thinking and responding as early American colonists. The students made decisions, working, coping, and, hopefully, surviving and prospering in the New World. The skills they learned were: reading a legend on a map, locating places on a map using latitude and longitude, interpreting and reading various types of maps, applying knowledge in a practical way, and effectively dividing a large task among a group of people. The feelings and attitudes developed were: understanding the motivations which drove colonists to the New World, appreciating the difficult life early colonists faced, sensing the satisfaction resulting from effectively role playing, understanding how the division of labor assists a group in problem solving, sensing that you are part of a group working together, and understanding the frustrations and helplessness of facing unknown hazards. This unit culminated with each individual colony constructing a physical model of what they thought their colony would look like. This unit of study was very successful in using cooperative learning.

Another action taken to help students take ownership for their learning was the introduction of an assignment notebook (Appendix M). On the classroom board there was an enlarged sheet of a page from the assignment book. At the end of each class the homework assignment was recorded on the board. The students were instructed to copy the assignment in their book. Some students took a while to establish this habit, but others caught on immediately and realized its benefit. At the end of each day, students were expected to have the teacher initial the assignment book before they were

dismissed. When the homework was completed at home a parent initialed it. An assignment contract was sent home and signed by the student, parent, and teacher (Appendix N). One parent commented, "I can't thank you enough for having my child use an assignment notebook. It was hard in the beginning to get her to use it, but now she knows what she is responsible for each night, and I know on a daily basis what they are learning in class." One student said, "I feel that the assignment books have really helped me" (Appendix O).

The last two interventions were to implement a series of activities related to self-regulation, critical, and creative thinking strategies, and to implement these thinking strategies in curricular activities. These interventions were incorporated on an ongoing basis once the "habits of mind" were introduced and modeled to the students. Once the students had an awareness of the these strategies, they were expected to use them at appropriate times. They became very skillful at using graphic organizers to achieve their plan that they had formulated. "Habits of Mind" were used in all subject areas (Appendix P). These interventions were demonstrated when the students did their semester assessment concerning curricular areas of reading, writing, and social studies. In one project, the students chose a period of American history they had studied and demonstrated their knowledge of it by creating an accurate, clear, historical fiction. Appropriate graphic organizers, like webbing, were used as a thinking strategy to help the students organize their thoughts so that they could develop their plot as well as their characters (Appendix Q). This project also demonstrated the writing process at its best. The students were aware of their necessary resources, had a plan, challenged themselves, were accurate and clear in their historical

descriptions and perservered. The aforementioned are all elements of critical, creative, and self-regulatory thinking strategies known as "habits of mind." This project lasted one month and was very successful. The students took tremendous ownership in their work and were proud to have their work displayed in the hall for others to see. One parent wrote, "I believe the habits of mind study made quite an impression." The students were so actively involved that they wrote or created skits demonstrating the various thinking strategies. As a follow-up, they planned an assembly for the entire school at the request of the principal. One student commented, "It (the assembly) taught me to be accurate, to be clear, to be open minded, to restrain impulsivity, to take a position when the situation warrants it, to be sensitive to others, and so on, in a fun way (Appendix R)." The principal wrote them a thank you after the assembly which said, "You had a plan...You were aware of your own thinking...You pushed yourself to the limits...You thought of new and unique ways of doing something...Congratulations for showing your "Habits of Mind." In order to become productive problem solvers and mindful decision makers, creative, critical, and self-regulatory thinking strategies are vital skills for all responsible learners.

In an effort to further improve self-responsibility, each student set quarterly goals (Appendix S). Goal setting provided a focus so students were continually aware of their targets each nine weeks. At the end of the quarter, the goal sheet was returned to the students and they evaluated their progress.

Intervention School B

The interventions began the first week of September in School B. The classroom was rather small and there was not room for a great deal of flexibility with desk arrangement. The teacher arranged them into four groups of five desks each.

The first and second interventions were to implement a series of learning activities that addressed community spirit while enhancing self-perception of social skills, self esteem, and establishing community building activities. During the first two days of this week, the researcher spent a great deal of time discussing the importance of a learning environment where students are respected by each other as well as by the teacher. On day three, the students spent a 45 minute period establishing a set of classroom rules which all students were expected to follow. Those rules chosen were:

1. Respect others at all times.
2. Listen while others are talking.
3. Raise your hand before speaking.
4. Always ask for help if you need it.
5. Be prepared for class.

The students were asked to reflect on this activity in their journals that same day. They acted very happy about being able to take part in setting the classroom rules. One student wrote the following in his journal. "Today was really fun. The teacher let us make up what ever rules we wanted. I think some kids will listen to these." Most of the reflections were very positive, although there were a few students who were not sure whether or not the rules were a good idea. A typical remark was, "I don't know why we made

up the rules, I don't think some kids will listen anyway." These reflections showed the difference in feelings among the students (Appendix T).

On day four of the first week of intervention, the students interviewed each other in pairs and then introduced their partner to the class. The intent was for them to learn about each other and at the same time build their self-esteem. Following this activity, each student was asked to make a collage using pictures and captions from magazines which would describe them. These would be displayed in the room along with a large collage made by the class, which would represent all of the students.

Throughout the 18 week period, self-esteem activities and community building activities were offered twice a week. The following is a list and a brief description of several of the activities.

Emotion Explosion: The objective of this lesson was twofold: first, to increase students' awareness of feelings and how they react to those emotions, and; second, to provide a chance to express feelings publicly. The students wrote different "feeling" words on small slips of paper which are then placed in a hat. They took turns pulling these words out of the hat and pantomined these feelings for others to guess. Discussion questions that follow the activity were: 1. Did you find it difficult to express your feelings publicly? 2. Is it okay to have these feelings?

Acrostic Poem About Me: Students brainstormed all of their best personal characteristics and then printed vertically their first and last name to create an acrostic poem with these ideas.

Classmate Bingo: Using a form which notes different topics of interest (Appendix U), students tried to find other students with matching interests.

Forced Contribution: The objective of this activity was to see that all students in the group cooperate and contribute. The students arranged themselves in a circle and a topic for discussion was assigned. Each person must contribute at least once. They must contribute in random order. The instructor's job was to keep a checklist of the students as they contributed.

Who Are We?: In this activity, the teacher read a list of statements to the class (Appendix V). The students raised their hand if the statement applied to them. The students were able to identify others with the same interests.

These activities were very successful and the students cooperated well. They appeared to enjoy all of the activities and seemed to look forward to that time of day which was set aside for the activities.

The second intervention was using curricular activities to promote cooperative learning and promote student ownership in their learning. These activities were offered twice a week for 45 minute sessions. Initially, it was necessary for the researcher to provide a clear presentation of cooperative learning since many of the students had no experience with it. The decision was made to use a very simple cooperative lesson of Think-Pair-Share for the first lesson. The students were asked to read a short section in their social studies book on Ancient Egypt. When the reading was completed, they were asked to turn to the person on their right to summarize the key points in the

reading and to pick one idea of importance to them and explain it. These ideas would be shared with the whole class. This activity was repeated the following week with groups of four students sharing ideas. Both activities worked very well. Students were asked to evaluate the activity each time. The majority of the students felt that this helped them understand the reading and asked to repeat this for other subjects.

After completing the entire unit on Ancient Egypt, another cooperative activity was implemented. Small groups of three or four students were formed. Each group had the same task, which was to write a song that highlighted the main ideas of the unit. They were allowed to use tunes from any song and set their ideas to these tunes. Prior to the activity, the researcher constructed a model for the students (Appendix W). The researcher felt that this was necessary for those students who needed concrete explanation of activities. This was a great success and students asked if they would be able to repeat the same activity for their science unit.

Another cooperative activity used was a follow-up for reading focusing on the novel, Number the Stars, by Lois Lowry. Groups of four students each were asked to choose a project to depict a scene from the story which would be presented to the class. The choices they had were: a short dramatization, a board game, a diorama, or a mobile. The students thoroughly enjoyed this activity and it was very interesting for the researcher to see their anticipation and excitement for their presentations. It was clear that students were able to successfully participate in both base groups and in formal task groups for cooperative learning activities.

As a closure activity for this unit, the students were asked to sequence the events from the novel without using their books. New groups of four were formed. Roles were assigned and the task was to record a list of events which would be shared with the entire class. This too, was very successful, although there seemed to be a bit more stress involved with this activity. The researcher wondered if it may have been due to the fact that they were not allowed to use their books.

Finally, the last two interventions were to implement a series of activities related to self-regulation, critical, and creative thinking strategies and to implement these thinking strategies in curricular activities. The "habits of mind" were introduced to the students and incorporated into the lessons. Graphic organizers were used for book reports (Appendix X), sequencing of events in a story, and comparing and contrasting characters in a story. An attribute web was used to depict character traits of main characters in a story (Appendix Y). The students became accustomed to using the web and the graphic organizer for their book reports so much so that these were available to them at all times from a table in the front of the room. The students automatically took one of each to complete their book reports. They were instructed to use the web and the graphic organizer as they wrote their reports. It was an excellent method to recall important information from their stories. This allowed the students to have a plan, challenge themselves, and organize their thoughts.

The students set quarterly goals in order to focus on what they expected to accomplish each quarter (Appendix Z). The goal sheet was returned to the student at the end of the nine weeks for them to evaluate. The

intent was to create ownership for their learning activities. This proved to be successful. The students anticipated reviewing their goals as well as setting new ones.

Assignment notebooks (Appendix AA) were used daily in order for the students to develop organizational skills which would be crucial to their success. It was difficult for many of the students to get into the habit of using the notebook. It required a great deal of monitoring by the researcher. If the researcher had record of missed assignments by a particular student, the assignment notebook would then be checked on a daily basis at the end of the school day. This would allow the researcher to determine if the student had forgotten to write an assignment in the notebook. Consequently, this required the teacher and the parent to initial it. The researcher and parents felt assignment notebooks fostered home-school communication.

Presentation and Analysis of Project Results

The preassessment activities were administered during the first week of school in order to minimize any influence on the data with the use of the interventions. The student questionnaire was administered the first week of school, September, 1995 to the targeted groups of students (Appendix D). The questionnaire was based on Marzano's Dimensions of Learning (Marzano, 1992). It was readministered in January, 1996 to the targeted groups to determine if there was an improved awareness in the areas of thinking strategies, cooperative learning, as well as an increased positive perception towards school and themselves as responsible learners. The same three questions from the student questionnaire were again selected for the purpose of comparison. The questions are: Number one, 14, and 26 which

are: Do you like coming to school? Do you have confidence?; and Do you push yourself to the limits? The graph in Figure 6 shows the percentage of students answering "sometimes" to these questions.

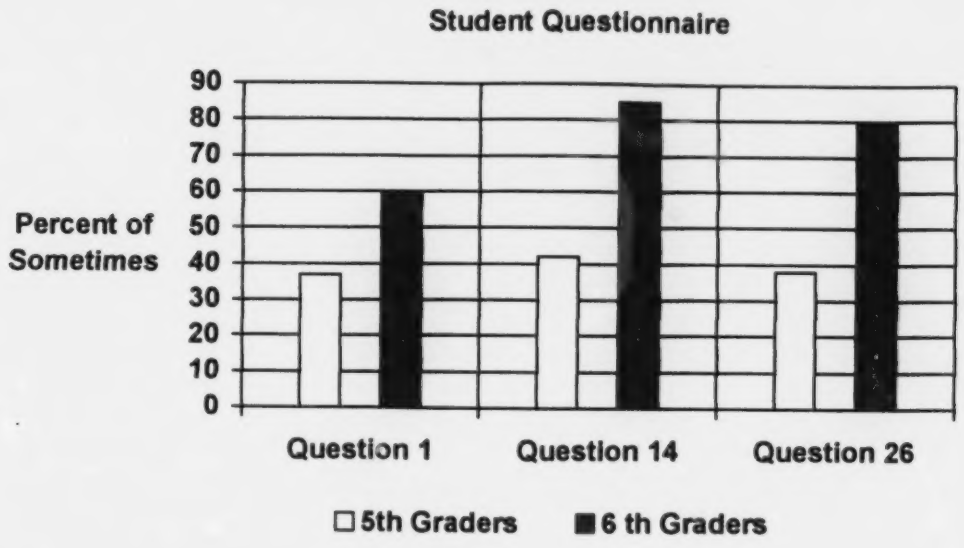

Figure 6

In target group A, 37 percent answered "sometimes" to question number 1, 42 percent answered "sometimes" to question number 14, and 38 percent answered "sometimes" to question number 26. In target group B 60 percent of the students answered "sometimes" to question number 1, 85 percent answered "sometimes" to question number 14, and 80 percent answered "sometimes" to question number 26.

After comparing the results from the September questionnaire to the January questionnaire, the researchers reached a number of conclusions. First, there was a high increase in "always" responses in the fifth grade class which explains why there was a decrease in the "sometimes" answers.

Second, the results from question 1 indicated a marked improvement in attitudes and perceptions relating to school as a safe environment. Third, the results from question number 14 showed an improvement in self-esteem for the majority of the students. Finally, the results from question number 26 proved that students had acquired an improved awareness of self-regulatory thinking strategies. The researchers concluded that these responses showed a significant improvement in learner responsibility.

The staff surveys (Appendices B and C) were readministered in January, 1996 to note any improvement in the areas of learner responsibility. The researchers concluded that the results from these surveys were not a method of assessment for the terminal objective. They were administered in September to show a need for improvement in learner responsibility. Therefore the post survey results are not reported here.

Finally, the results from the behavior record forms, which the researchers had developed, were again used to measure incomplete assignments, failure to use assignment notebooks, and disruptive or off-task behavior patterns. The researchers used the four weeks following the initial four week time frame as an indication of improvement. The results were as follows. Of the 26 students in the fifth grade class, 26 students were involved with this process. A summary of the incidents and behavior categories of the fifth graders is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Number and Catergories of Irresponsible Behavior
School A
January 5, 1996 through January 30, 1996

Behavior	Number of Incidents	Number of Students Involved
Incomplete Assignments	10	4
No. Assignment Book	4	3
Disruptive Behavior	1	1
Off-task	5	5

Of the 20 incidents recorded during the one month period, 50 percent dealt with failure to complete assignments; 20 percent involved failure to use assignment notebooks properly; 5 percent dealt with disruptive behavior; and 25 percent dealt with off-task behavior.

Of the 16 students in the sixth grade class, all were involved with this process over a four week period. A summary of the number of incidents and behavior categories of the sixth grade students is presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Number and Catergories of Irresponsible Behavior
School B
January 5, 1996 through January 30, 1996

Behavior	Number of Incidents	Number of Students Involved
Incomplete Assignments	10	5
No. Assignment Book	8	4
Disruptive Behavior	11	3
Off-task	13	6

Of the 42 incidents recorded during the one month period, 24 percent dealt with failure to complete assignments; 19 percent dealt with failure to use an assignment notebook properly; 26 percent dealt with disruptive behavior; and 31 percent dealt with off-task behavior. A further analysis of the behavior forms indicated that off-task behavior involved the highest percentage of the students. When comparing the amount of incidents from September to January in both targeted groups, it was clear that not only had there been a decrease in incidents overall, but that the number of incomplete assignments from both targeted groups dropped considerably. The percentage of incidents did not show a clear indication of improvement due to the fact that there was a large decrease in the total number of incidents recorded. However, there was a clear indication of improvement when the number of students involved in the incidents was considered. In target group A, 73 percent of the students were involved in the incomplete assignments incidents in September while in January only 15 percent of the students were

involved. This was also true for each of the other specific incidents recorded. In target group B, 94 percent of the students were involved in the incomplete assignment notebooks in September, while 31 percent of the students were involved in January. There was a marked decline in students involved in each of the other specific incidents as well. It was clearly evident that in both groups, learner responsibility had improved.

An additional assessment was added in School A when an evaluation form was sent to each parent. The questions dealt with their child's learning experience during the year, and whether or not they felt their child had developed learner responsibility (Appendix BB). From this parent inquiry, a positive response was received reflecting that the majority of the students, not only had a good learning experience this year, but had improved in the area of learner responsibility.

Informal assessments were completed in School B after annual reviews were conducted on each of the special needs students. The researcher kept anecdotal records on comments from parents as well as other teachers regarding the students' progress during the review. It was evident, by a marked improvement in grades and test scores for the majority of the students, that responsibility had increased. It was also apparent from the comments that were made, that the self-esteem of the majority of the students had increased. The school psychologist had noted several instances where the individuals had "blossomed" into happy and self-confident youngsters. One teacher made a comment about a particular student who at the beginning of the school year, did not participate orally in lessons. "She is like a different person. She seems to be so sure of herself now. It's such a nice

change." It was clear that not only had learner responsibility improved, but that self-esteem had frequently increased.

Conclusions and Recommendations

After 18 weeks of implementation, it became clear to the researchers that using cooperative learning strategies, fostering a safe community environment which enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence among each participant, and introducing and teaching the mental habits of critical, creative, and self-regulation thinking strategies, did indeed improve learner responsibility. The interventions were very successful. One way the success was apparent was in student journal entries. One example of a student journal entry was. "I work hard on everything and push myself to the limits. I plan out things in my work and use new and improved ways to do my work. I help others if they need help." This illustrates student awareness of the value of using cooperative learning and using habits of mind to improve learner responsibility. It was quite impressive to witness the growth and maturity of students who, in the beginning of the year, had a difficult time staying focused and who, now, not only pay attention, but also complete their work and take ownership and pride in it. Further support came from use of the assignment books which were a tremendous benefit for getting students off to a good start with their organizational skills. Additionally, the excitement and enthusiasm occur as students discover a new concept and then understand the proper way to share their new found knowledge with peers while demonstrating appropriate social skills. Incorporating the above stated processes during the curricular day, students learned to work cooperatively in various problem solving and decision making situations.

Both classrooms truly became safe environments where everyone respected and treated each other as they would want to be treated. It was amazing to see the pride and unity which grew in both schools.

Communication improved among the students as they used their social skills in cooperative learning. Many friendships were formed because students learned how to relate to and be sensitive to others. It was very rewarding as teachers to be part of this experience.

Upon reflection of the assessments, the researchers realized the value of having students record their reflections about certain lessons and projects. The students learned how to transfer their learning to various situations in life. In reflecting about the lives of early American colonists, one student wrote, "I learned that it really wasn't easy surviving attacks by other colonies or Indians. These people used habits of mind such as: planning, being aware of necessary resources, hanging in there when it was tough, being accurate and clear, and retaining impulsivity." They could relate the importance of habits of mind in life and learning. One child wrote, "If you did not have a plan when you were attacking Indians or a colony, you would not know what to do, and you would probably lose the attack."

On of the most helpful assessments was recording monthly behavior incidents. This heightened the researchers awareness on a daily basis of who was responsible for certain behavior. This worked so well , the researchers planned to use this in future years. It is a wonderful tool to have available for conferencing with parents. Nothing can be denied when it is in black and white. Teacher anecdotal records were also useful and will continue to be used in future years. The staff surveys were not used for post assessment. If

this project were repeated, the staff survey would be a preassessment because its data would show the need to improve learner responsibility. The student questionnaire was useful to show a need, but the researchers concluded that it was unnecessarily long. It could have been just as effective if it had been ten to fifteen questions.

Using cooperative learning not only increased a positive perception towards learning and school while teaching social skills, but it also helped the students become responsible learners because others depended on their contributions. A sense of pride and ownership of learning developed as the students demonstrated healthy attitudes and perceptions of their existence in the community. This was very worthwhile for the teachers and the students involved.

Even though this project is completed, the researchers can still see the benefits for other educators in the school to use cooperative learning and teach thinking strategies to aid in problem solving and decision making. Self-esteem and community building results from a safe environment which is beneficial to all students and allows them to take pride and ownership in who and what they are. The special needs students in School B benefited a great deal from the implementation of the activities directed toward self-esteem. It was evident that they became very comfortable in the self-contained classroom very quickly. It took a little longer for this to be effective in the collaborative classroom, however as the school year went on, their self confidence rose and they were much more eager to participate in activities. Both researchers would encourage others in their buildings to start slow and try some of these strategies. Building a common vocabulary among students

and training them from a young age can only enhance their student responsibility as they progress through the years. The researcher from School A trained her faculty in the mental habits of thinking and is going to present session on "Habits of Mind" at a national conference in the Summer of 1996. District A has developed initiatives which include the these thinking strategies, and they will tie into assessment initiatives which are being developed. School B is advanced with the collaborative classroom concept where special needs teachers are a part of a team of teachers. The special needs teacher collaborates with the classroom teacher for those classes which the special needs students are mainstreamed. This type of team teaching requires a great deal of time and therefore team planing time has been incorporated into the daily schedule. This also allows the special needs students the opportunity to experience cooperative learning in the collaborative classroom as well as the self-contained classroom.

In conclusion, the researchers found that in order for students to function in a learning community as responsible learners, the following processes were found to be successful:

1. Implementing a series of learning activities that address community spirit while enhancing self-perception of social skills.

2. Establish community building activities.

3. Experience curricular activities that require peer interaction resulting in successful cooperative learning.

4. Implement a series of activities related to self-regulation, critical, and creative thinking.

5. Require the use of various thinking strategies in curricular activities chosen by the students.

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Appendices

Behavior Record Form

Month_____

STUDENT NAMES	INCOMPLETE	NO ASSIGNMENT BOOK	DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR	OFF-TASK
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
21				
22				
23				
24				
25				
26				

Appendix B

School A
Teacher Survey

1. Does your class listen attentively? yes no

2. Does your class demonstrate critical, creative, and self-regulatory thinking? yes no

3. Does your class function well in cooperative learning groups? yes no

4. Does your class complete assignments? yes no

5. Does your class display self-control? yes no

Appendix C

School B

Teacher Survey

1. Is there acceptable behavior among students during a cooperative learning lesson?

   Always Sometimes Never

2. Is it necessary to reward students for responsible activities, such as homework completion?

   Always Sometimes Never

3. Have you found it necessary for students to use assignment notebooks to complete homework and other assignments?

   Always Sometimes Never

Appendix D

Student Questionnaire

Directions: Answer each question honestly from your past educational experiences.

1. Do you like coming to school?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

2. Where in school do you feel important?
A. regular classes B. art, music, or p.e. C. no place

3. Do you have fun in the classroom at school?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

4. Do you feel that you miss learning opportunities when you are absent?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

5. Does it bother you to miss school?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

6. Do you feel that you belong in your class?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

7. Do you feel that you have any choice in what you learn?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

8. Do you feel important as a person in your class?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

9. Do you feel you have various thinking strategies that you can use to solve problems?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

10. Do you feel your teacher is a caring person when it comes to his/her students?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

11. How do you like to learn?
A. Cooperatively (Working with peers)
B. Individually (Working by yourself)

12. How do you like to show your teacher what you have learned?
A. Taking paper and pencil tests
B. Doing a project of your choice

13. Do you like to judge your own learning?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

14. Do you have confidence?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

15. Do you think there is more than one way to solve problems?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

16. Are you open minded?
A. Always B. Sometimes c. Never

17. Do you take pride in revising your work to improve it?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

18. Do you consider yourself a responsible person?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

19. Are you a good thinker?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

20. Do you get satisfaction out of helping others?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

21. Do you enjoy learning?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

22. Do you have a plan when you begin learning task?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

23. Do you use resources to help you learn?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

24. Do you actively seek clarity and accuracy in the information you are receiving?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

25. After self-evaluation, do you consider what you would have done differently next time?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

26. Do you push yourself to the limits?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

27. Do you resist impulsivity (Do you have a hard time controlling your excitement to respond) ?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

28 Do you listen carefully when others are sharing?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

29. Do you continue to work hard even when the task becomes difficult?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

30. Do you set goals you want to meet?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

31. Do you see learning situations in new and unique ways?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

32. Do you try to get along with other students?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

33. Do you try to make the classroom a comfortable place?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

34. Do you see the value in what you are asked to learn?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

35. Do you help make the classroom an orderly place?
A. Always B. Sometimes C. Never

Appendix E

Saint Xavier University
Consent to Participate in a Research Study
"Improving Learner Responsibility by Utilizing Problem Solving and Thinking Strategies and Cooperative Learning"

This research project is being conducted by Kathleen McGee. Its purpose is to have students take greater responsibility for their learning by teaching collaborative skills, problem solving techniques, and thinking strategies. Students will be asked to fill out a questionnaire about their learning and will be interviewed by me. Students will not be graded in any way, and their responses to any surveys will be completely anonymous. Should you have any questions about your student's participation in this program, please feel free to call or visit me at school. If you are comfortable with your child's participation , please sign the consent form below and return it to me at school.

I, the parent/legal guardian of the minor named below, acknowledge that the project's purposes have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the program and my child's participation can be addressed by contacting the school. I voluntarily consent to my child's participation, and I understand that any information collected during the program will be completely anonymous.

(name of minor participant)

_____ _____
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian Date

Saint Xavier University
Consent to Participate in a Research Study
"Improving Learner Responsibility by Utilizing Problem Solving and Thinking Strategies and Cooperative Learning"

This research project is being conducted by Joyce Powell. Its purpose is to have students take greater responsibility for their learning by teaching collaborative skills, problem solving techniques, and thinking strategies. Students will be asked to fill out a questionnaire about their learning and will be interviewed by me. Students will not be graded in any way, and their responses to any surveys will be completely anonymous. Should you have any questions about your student's participation in this program, please feel free to call or visit me at school. If you are comfortable with your child's participation , please sign the consent form below and return it to me at school.

I, the parent/legal guardian of the minor named below, acknowledge that the project's purposes have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the program and my child's participation can be addressed by contacting the school. I voluntarily consent to my child's participation, and I understand that any information collected during the program will be completely anonymous.

(name of minor participant)

_____ _____
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian Date

Appendix F

Graphic Organizers,

Matrixes,

and

Venn Diagrams

Appendix F continued

Decision-Making Matrix

Decision Question:

CRITERIA	ALTERNATIVES		

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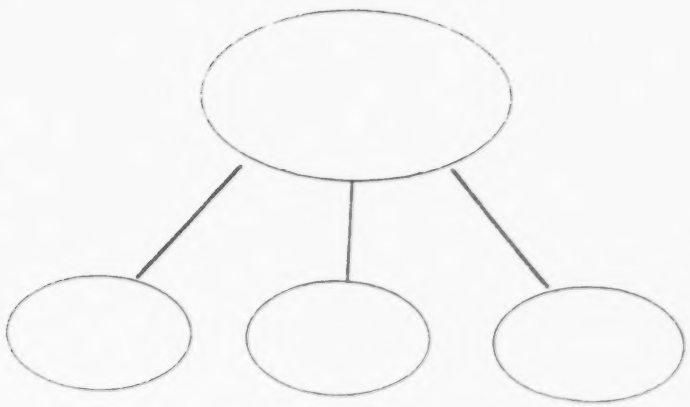
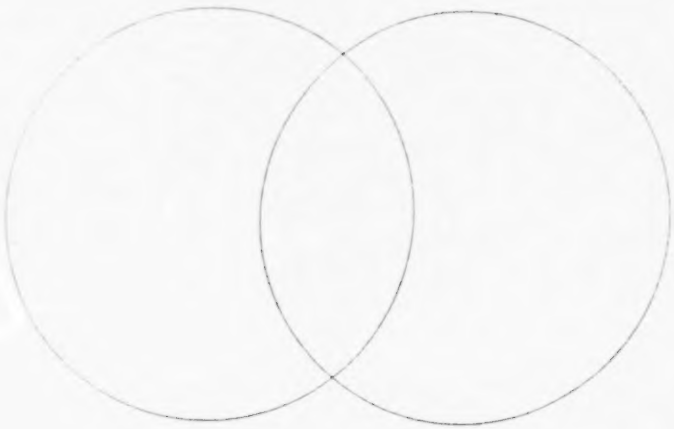
Problem/Solution Pattern



Use to organize information into identified problem and its solutions.

Making Comparisons - Venn Diagram



Use to compare two things with similarities as well as differences

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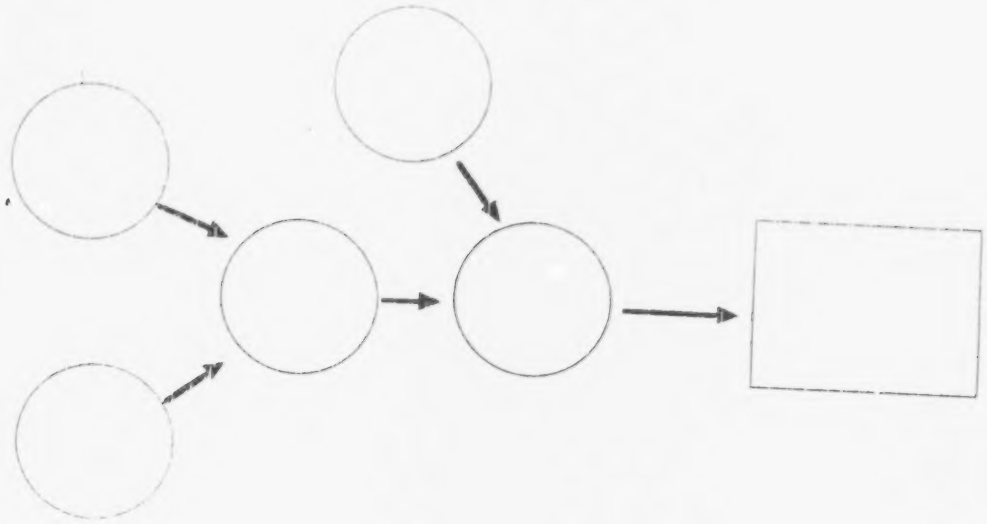
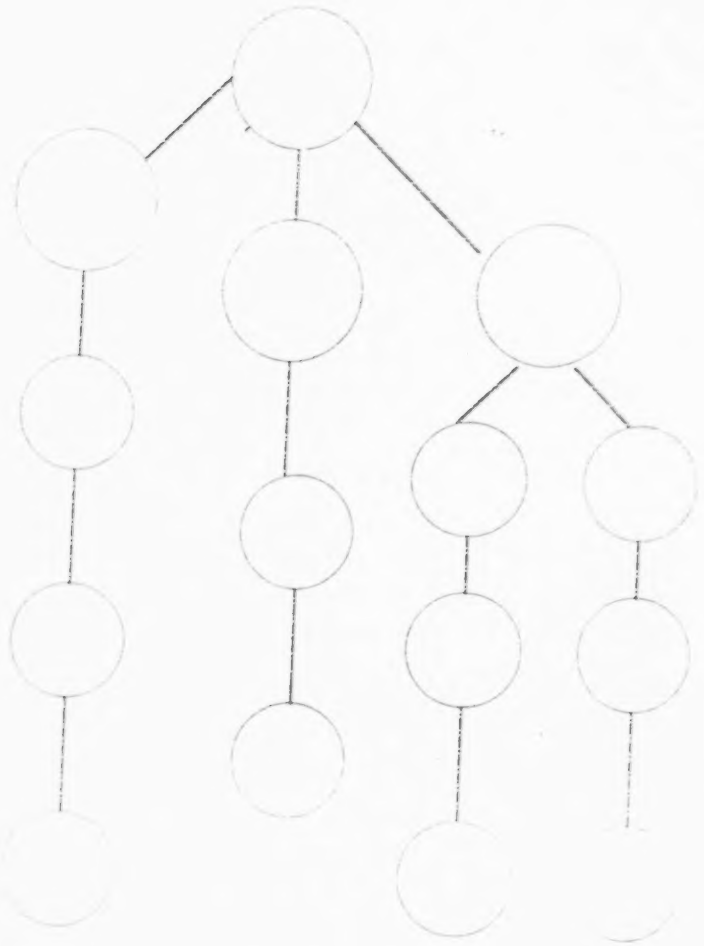
Process/Cause Pattern



Use to organize information into causal network leading to specific outcome or steps leading to a specific product

Classifying



Use this type of diagram to classify according to a hierachical approach.

Appendix G

Anecdotal Note-January

Great improvement in all areas. The class is really growing as a community. They are using their habits of mind in everything they do which has resulted in learner responsibility. They are not afraid to show their creative thinking ideas which has been demonstrated in their semester assessment in social studies/language arts and in science with their simple machine projects. They are using other habits of mind-for example being sensitive to feedback in their creative writing and hanging in their when it is tough (president reports), challenging themselves (hyperstudio and semester assessment), and looking for new and different ways to do things (simple machines project and astronomy activities). In critical thinking, they are: being clear and accurate (semester assessment), being open-minded (discussions about Martin Luther King, Harriet Tubman, and Jane Pittman), taking a position and defending it (comparing and contrasting slavery issue and North versus South, English Tories and Patriots), and restraining impulsivity has improved but occasionally they have to be reminded. Self-regulatory thinking is being demonstrated as they are being more aware of their own thinking and having a plan (writing semester assessment, hyperstudio, and and Revolutionary War puppets), evaluating effectiveness and being sensitive to feed back (Revolutionary War puppets skits, tax simulation. and role playing colonial tavern scene), and using necessary resources (president reports, semester assessment, and Revolutionary War puppets). Cooperative learning is used everyday especially in the new math program, science (astronomy and simple machine , and social studies units). Improvement in learner responsibility was rewarded (having a popcorn party, having lunch in the room, going to a theater to see a current movie, and ordering a pizza). All these celebrations also strengthened our sense of community. □hey eagerly continue to work because now they are feeling good about being a responsible learner and knowing that they have a community of supportive peers.

The class appears to be learning more about each other each day. The activities which we have been able to do to enhance self-esteem have been very helpful in finding out more about the students. (Sept. 20, 1995)

Today was a very interesting day. Two of the students had missed assignments in Math class, but came to me before of class to tell me. Neither one had an excuse, but both admitted that they had just forgotten to write the assignment in their notebooks. They each asked for an extra assignment since they felt that this would be a suitable consequence. I told each of them that I was very happy that they had taken ownership for their actions and that I had hoped this would help them to remember for future assignments. It was a very positive experience. (Sept. 29, 1995)

Outdoor Ed was a great experience. It was very interesting to see the students outside of class. Chris displayed strong leadership ability, which I had never been aware of. He lead the entire group during the Group Initiative activity. (Oct. 18, 1995)

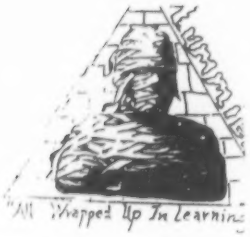
The students appeared to be happy to return to school after Christmas break. Several comments were made by different students as to how they had missed being with the group in class. They asked to do "some fun activities like we had done before Christmas." (Jan. 4, 1996)

#25
9-26-95

So far I feel very comfortable with this 5th grade community.
When we went to the pond it really made me think about how much the pond life community and our community have in common. Sharing, cooperation, communication.
I think the Bill of Rights was a very good idea, but some people need to work on them.
Also in our class I LOVE our T-shirts. It was a great idea.
But most of all I love my teacher and class.

Appendix I

Bill of Rights



1. No Put Downs
2. Respect Others' Ideas And Property
3. Listen When Others Are Talking
4. Use Appropriate Behavior
5. Think Before You Speak
6. Raise Hand Before Speaking
7. Share With Others
8. Be Responsible For Supplies And Your Own Learning
9. Set A Good Example For Others
10. You Have A Right To Feel Safe And Comfortable And Have Fun Learning In My Classroom

I,_____,promise to abide by the above Bill of Rights which we decided on as a community, known as Mummies, for the 1995-96 school year at School. If I break one of the aforementioned rights, I agree to face the consequences that my peers and teacher see fit for my inappropriate behavior.

Appendix J

SEP 0 6 1995

#23

Jacob

I think 5TA grade is going to be really fun. And I think Mrs. Magee is going to teach us every thing we need to know about 5th grade. I let every body in are class will go into 6th grade very open minded and redy to do any thing the teacher tells them to do.

#18

SEP 0 6 1995

Cathy

I think this will be a great year I ~~was~~ scard the frist day of school but now I am just fine I like doing projtes with our communtty

Appendix K

Ingrid

SCAVENGER HUNT

1. READ EACH CATEGORY IN THE LEFT COLUMN. WRITE YOUR ANSWER IN THE MIDDLE COLUMN.

2. WHEN THE SCAVENGER HUNT BEGINS:
   - -Introduce yourself to someone
   - -Discuss a category
   - -Sign your names when there is a match
   - -Thank each other

3. A PERSON CAN ONLY SIGN THEIR NAMES ONCE TO YOUR LIST.

CATEGORY	ME	A FRIEND
A. FAVORITE COLOR	Blue	~~Stacy~~
B. FAVORITE SPORT	Horseback-riding	Lauren
C. FAVORITE TV SHOW	Full House	
D. FAVORITE FOOD	Spagetti	Cassie
E. FAVORITE MOVIE	Man Of the House	
F. FAVORITE BOOK	Changes For Felicity	
G. FAVORITE SEASON	Winter	
H. BIRTH ORDER	2/2	Amy
I. EYE COLOR	brown	Tyler
J. PLACE OF BIRTH	St. Charles	Katie
K. ADD YOUR OWN Favorite Candy bar?	Hersheys	

(C) Global Learning Communities
Carole Cooper 1993

Appendix L

Lindsey
• girl
• long hair
• Tall
• Favorite animal Dolphin
• Born in Aug.
• Does still like to read.
• favorite T.V. Show Home Improvement
• likes to be with friends in spare time.
• same class
• same age
• have pets
• Science is favorite subject
• favorite sport Basketball
• both wear watches
• both have brothers
Mike
• Boy
• short hair
• short
• favorit animal Gerbel
• Born in Feb.
• Does like to read
• favorit T.V. Show The Simpsons
• like to fiddle with pocket knives in spare time

Making Comparisons - Venn Diagram

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Appendix M

_____, _____ _____ 19___
Day Month Date

Assignments	Date Due	Test Day
Reading		
English/L. Arts		
Spelling		
Math		
Science		
Social Studies		

Things To Take Home

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Things To Bring To School

1. _____
2. _____

Messages

Signature(s)

Appendix N

ASSIGNMENT BOOK CONTRACT

THE FIFTH GRADE THIS YEAR IS ISSUING AN ASSIGNMENT BOOK FOR STUDENTS TO RECORD THEIR DAILY ACTIVITIES AND HOMEWORK. WE FEEL THIS ORGANIZATIONAL DEVISE WILL BE BENEFICIAL IN THIS SCHOOL YEAR AS WELL AS IN THEIR FUTURE SCHOOL CAREERS.

I ASK THAT THE PARENTS OF MY STUDENTS LOOK AT THIS BOOK EVERY NIGHT AND TALK OVER THE SCHOOL DAY WITH THEIR CHILD. I ALSO ASK THAT YOU SIGN OFF THAT YOU HAVE INDEED BEEN SHOWN THIS BOOK. IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO BRING THE BOOK TO THE PARENT.

SOME DAYS THERE MIGHT NOT BE HOMEWORK, BUT THERE SHOULD NEVER BE ANY BLANK SPACES. SHORT DESCRIPTIONS OF CLASS ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE WRITTEN DOWN. IF THERE IS A BLANK SPACE ASK YOUR CHILD TO RECALL THE DAYS EVENTS AND WRITE THEM IN THE APPROPRIATE PLACE.

(PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THE BOTTOM PORTION)

ASSIGNMENT BOOK CONTRACT

I, _____(student name), will fill out my assignment book every day, take it home, show it to my parents, and bring it back to school with a parent signature.

(DATE:)

I, _____(parent name/s), will look at the assignment book when brought to me. I will also ask questions about the school activities written in the book and will sign that I have indeed seen the book.

(DATE:)

I, _____(teacher name), will check the assignment book each day to see if it is completely filled out and I will mark that I have seen the book with parent signatures.

(DATE:)_____

10-5-95
Bryan

I love having a assignment book because it has been a habit to get it signed and brought back to school. It always reminds me about my homework and makes me more organized and is one of the best things ever made.

10-5-95

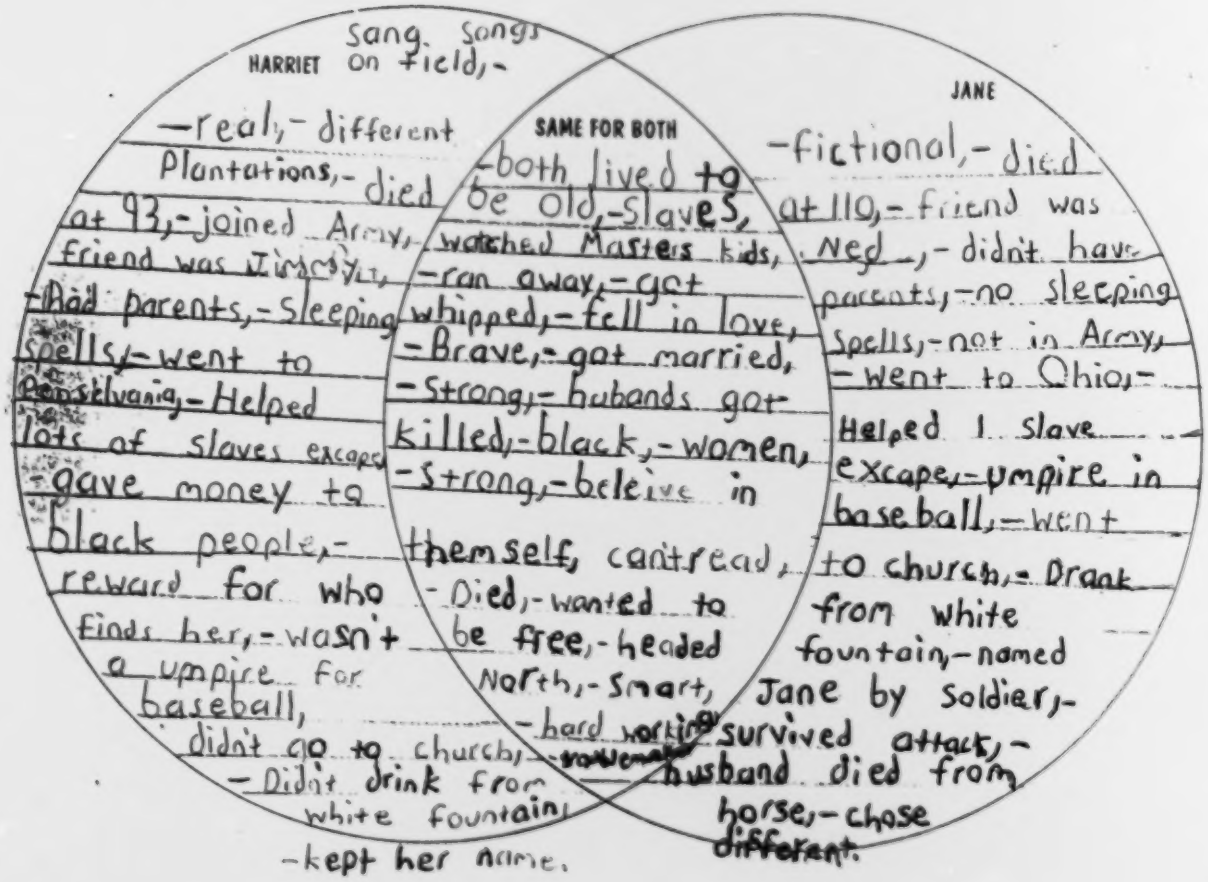
Anna #26

I really like having the assignment books because if we didn't have them I would forget a lot more than I do now. I think they are great and I'm glad we are going to have them next year.

10/5/95 #6

I feel that the assignment books have really helped me. They keep me orginized and show me what I have to take to school and what I need to bring home.

HARRIET AND JANE


HARRIET
sang songs on field,- -real,- different Plantations,- died at 93,- joined Army,- friend was Jim Lee,- had parents,- sleeping spells,- went to Pennsilvania,- Helped lots of slaves excape -gave money to black people,- reward for who finds her,- wasn't a umpire for baseball, didn't go to church, -Didn't drink from white fountain, -kept her name.
SAME FOR BOTH
-both lived to be old,-Slaves, watched Masters kids, -ran away,- got whipped,- fell in love, -Brave,- got married, -Strong,- hubands got killed,- black,- women, -Strong,- beleive in themself, cantread, -Died,- wanted to be free,- headed North,- Smart, -hard working, -survived attack,- husband died from horse,- chose different.
JANE
-fictional,- died at 110,- friend was Ned,- didn't have parents,- no sleeping spells,- not in Army, -went to Ohio,- Helped 1 slave excape,- umpire in baseball,- went to church,- Drank from white fountain,- named Jane by Soldier,-

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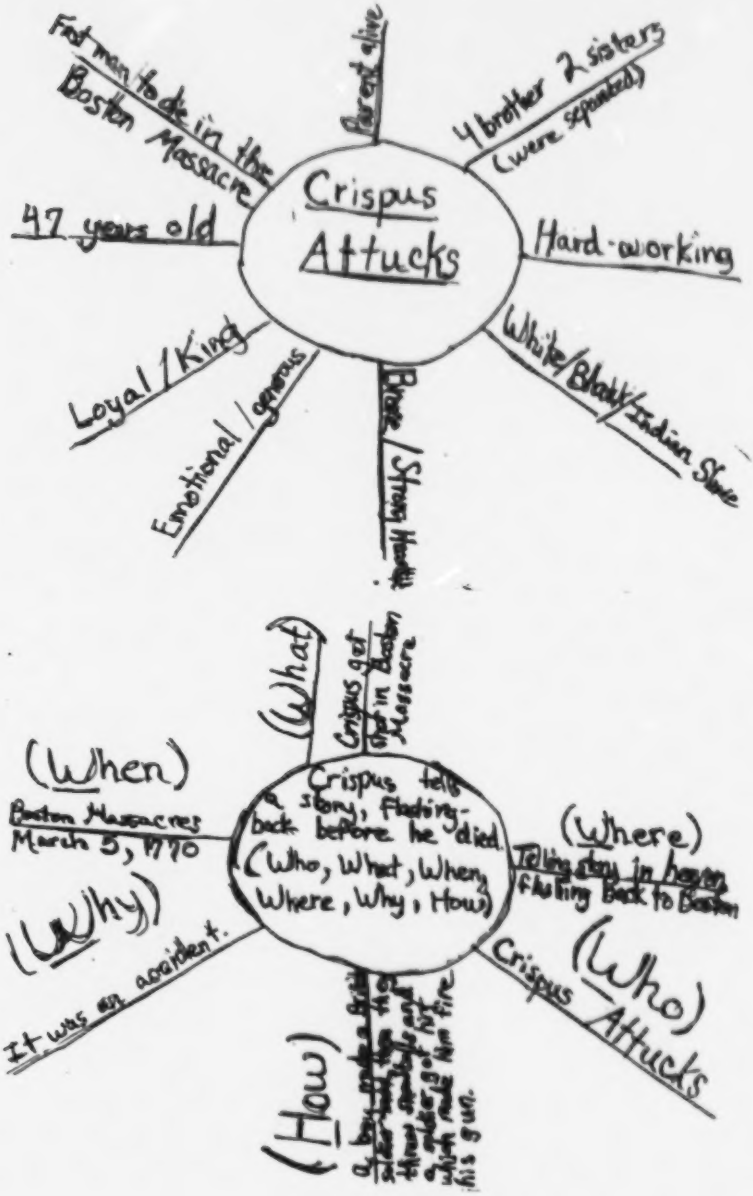
Appendix Q

Graphic organizer-Webbing



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Erika's #7

I love creative dramatics with the Habits of mind because I love doing plays only this isn't a play. It taught me to Be accurate, Be clear, Be open-minded, Restrain impulsivity, Taking a position where the situation warrants it, Be sensitive to others, ... and so on in a fun way. I hope we do it everyday.

FG Tyler 10/12

I thought roll playing helped me learn more about habits of mind. My group did "keep an open mind" or like never judge a book by the cover

I think that we did a good job. We used creative thinking to do the job. Habits of Mind really help when things get tough. This help!.

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Appendix S

Name Stewart
Date November 6 1995

My Goals for This Nine Weeks

Reading/Language Arts
Sometimes when I read, I think of other things like school and sports and I read the words but I dont really store the Idea in my head.

Science Wright better notes.

Social Studies Cooperate better with my teamates and not get of the subjest with the other guys.

Math Pay more attention.

Habits Of Mind I should Be sensitive to others by listening.

Social Skill I Should work more on Division.

Other _____

I don't know why
we made up the rules,
I don't think some kids
will listen anyway

Today was really fun.
The teacher let us make
up whatever rules we wanted

Classmate Bingo

Write your answers on the lines. Find people who have the same answers as yours. Have them write their name below your answer. Try to collect a different signature for each box

Birthday month Feb	Hobby BASEBALL JARS	Favorite sport HOCKEY	Good book I've read this year Shiloh
Best school subject MATH	Hair color Brown	Number of sisters One	Pet I'd like to own Dog
Number of brothers One	Favorite food PIZZA	Favorite board game SORRY	Activity I'd like to do with someone else Play Axel
Favorite TV show	Favorite season SUMMER	Chore I do at home Help Jen	Favorite activity that I do alone

Challenge! Find three classmates with whom you have more than two things in common.

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GROUP, TEAM AND SCHOOL IDENTITY

Group Cohesiveness

WHO ARE WE?

1. TIME: One Session

   MATERIALS: None

2. PROCEDURE:

   The teacher reads the following list to the class. In each case, students raise their hands if the statement applies to them. This way students can see who else in the class is like them. The teacher can set the tone by also responding.

   "WHO ARE WE" LIST

   1. I like candy with nuts.
   2. I like to stay up late.
   3. I have flown in a plane.
   4. I have been in a bus in a city.
   5. I have been on a farm.
   6. I have a pet.
   7. I like tangerines.
   8. I am the oldest child in my family.
   9. I am the youngest child in my family.
   10. I am the middle child in my family.
   11. My grandmother or grandfather lives with me.
   12. I can climb a tree.
   13. I can roller skate.
   14. I have my own room.
   15. I go to church on Sundays.
   16. I go to temple on Saturdays.
   17. I wish I were older.
   18. I wish I could fly.
   19. I have nightmares sometimes.
   20. I am afraid of shadows.
   21. I am afraid of bugs.
   22. I am afraid of snakes.
   23. I like TV.
   24. I have been to camp.
   25. I have been to a different state.
   26. I have seen the mountains.
   27. I like the summer.
   28. I like to eat coconuts.
   29. I have played in the snow.
   30. I have ridden a motor bike.
   31. I have a secret hiding place.
   32. I like to ride horses.

6II - 28

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Ancient Egypt
to the tune of La Cucaracha

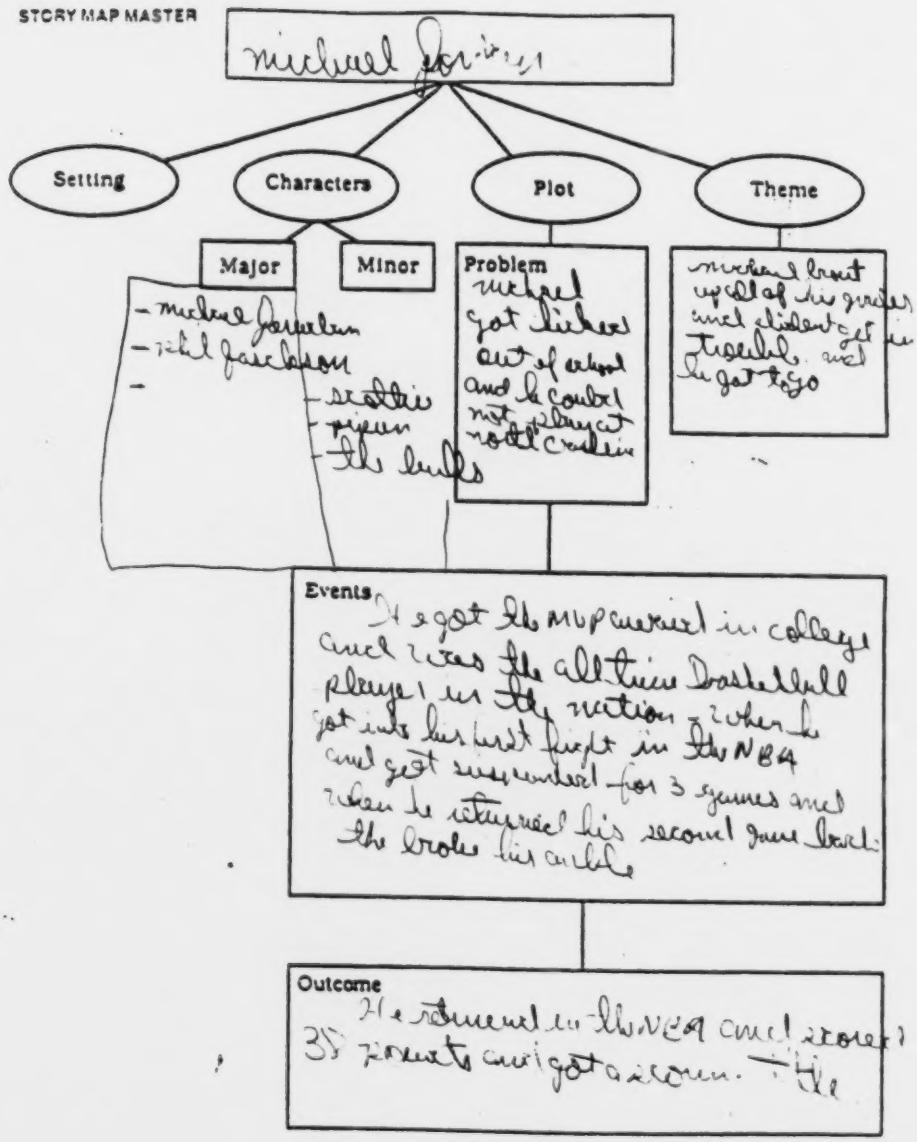
In Ancient Egypt in Ancient Egypt
King Tut was a boy king
Carter found him, buried in a pyramid
In a solid gold coffin.

In Ancient Egypt in Ancient Egypt
The longest river in the world
Is the Nile, and it flows North
With Papyrus at its banks.

On the scrolls made of papyrus
Hieroglyphics was an art.

They'd tell a story
And write with symbols
And the people were real smart.

Appendix X



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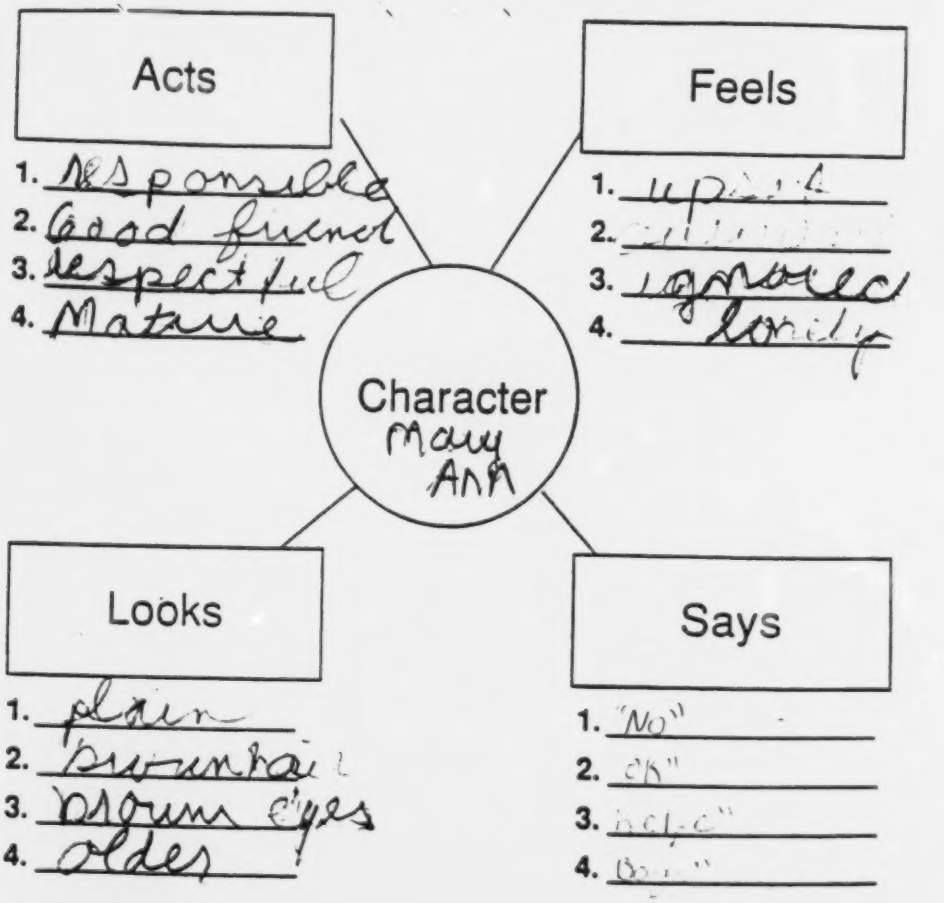
Attribute Web

The attribute web below is designed to help you gather clues the author provides about what a character is like. Fill in the blanks with words and phrases which tell how the character acts and looks, as well as what the character says and what others say about him or her.



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Appendix Z

Name _____
Date _____

My Goals for This Nine Weeks

Reading/Language Arts
_____
_____
_____

Science_____
_____
_____
_____

Social Studies_____
_____
_____
_____

Math_____
_____
_____
_____

Habits Of Mind _____
_____
_____
_____

Social Skill _____
_____
_____
_____

Other _____
_____
_____
_____

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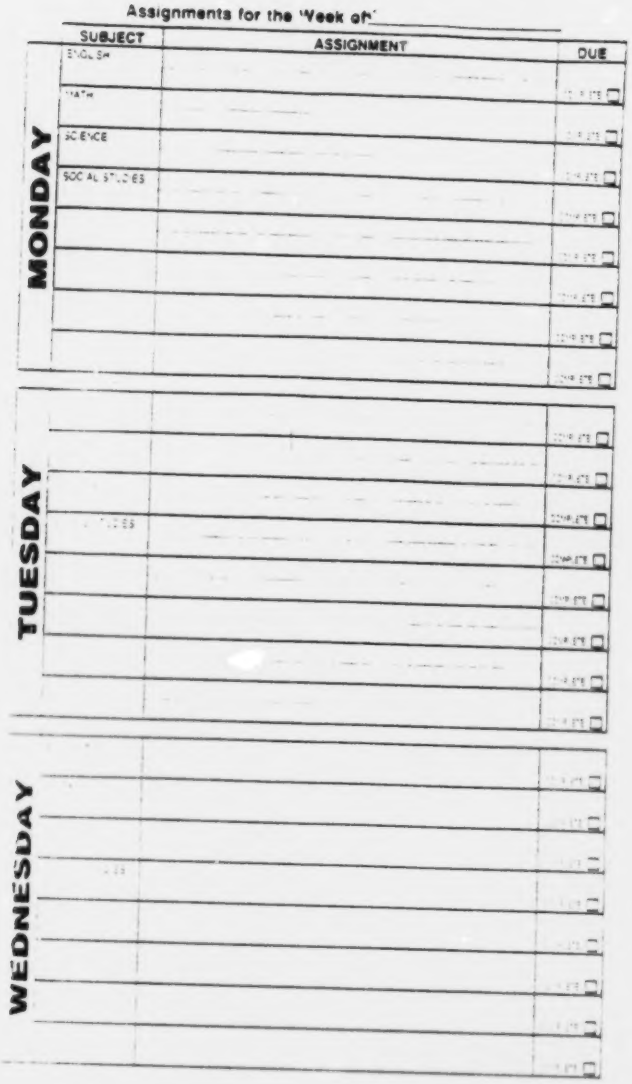
Appendix AA



Assignments for the Week of:

	SUBJECT	ASSIGNMENT	DUE
MONDAY	ENGLISH		
	MATH		
	SCIENCE		
	SOCIAL STUDIES		
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			

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Would you be so kind as to answer the following question: Do you feel that your child has had a good experience this year? Why or why not? Do you feel that he/she has developed learner responsibility? Explain, please. Thank you so much.

My son's experience this year has been outstanding. The variety of learning activities has been a major factor in contributing to his growth and understanding. He is totally committed to learning and has discovered the joy of learning. His success is evidence of his development of learner responsibility. He successfully works with others as well as taking the responsibility for his own work. His work is meaningful, so he is eager to do it. He is also eager to tackle projects.